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XXV.—*An Account of the Hill Tribes of the Neilgherries.* By J. SHORTT, M.D., F.L.S., M.R.C.P.L., and L.D.S., Superintendent-General of Vaccine, Madras Presidency.

[Read June 23rd, 1868.]

#### PART I.—INTRODUCTION.

IN collecting and arranging all the information I have here put together regarding these interesting tribes, it is quite possible that some errors and many omissions may have occurred, although every care was taken to avoid such, and none but the most reliable information has been inserted. It may not, perhaps, be out of place to mention here the mode in which most of this matter was collected. I was on the Neilgherries during two seasons, and accompanied by a staff of vaccinators. I visited the greater part, if not all, of the munds, mottas, or hamlets, of the several tribes, and took advantage of the opportunity of quietly eliciting all the information I could by personal and frequent intercourse with the members of each tribe. Going about their hamlets, and entering their very habitations almost daily, as I did, with the ostensibly kind object of treating their sick, and conferring on the unprotected the boon of vaccination, I found no difficulty in winning their entire confidence, nor did they suspect I was an information hunter; and thus I obtained full and unreserved information upon every point that occurred to me to inquire about. I always took care to select as my informants the shrewdest and most intelligent of each hamlet.

The Todas, as a class, are much spoiled, so much so, that nobody now-a-days can go to see them without paying a *douceur*, which, if not gratuitously offered, is sure to be asked for and expected as a right; nor are they so unsophisticated and unreserved in their colloquial circumstances with strangers as they were at one time, and for which they were remarkable.

Whether the views I have here ventured to put forward, and the analytical reasoning and analogy upon which they are based, have been made sufficiently clear and consistent as to lead others to adopt the same opinion as myself regarding the remote history and origin of these interesting aboriginal tribes, I must leave *sub judice*, for the impartial judgment of the public to decide.

I have been over two and a half years collecting information of these hill tribes, and I have taken advantage of the opportunities afforded by my appointment of seeking information in every district in this presidency, over all of which I have been, and have in most districts consulted both Europeans and natives as to how far the peculiar social habit of polyandry, as practised among the Todas, prevails among other tribes in India. I have also consulted with some of the more learned pundits, and others, on the subject, and all the reliable information thus obtained I have brought to bear on the question.

The various weights and measurements were made by myself, as correct as it was possible to effect. The difficulty and trouble in completing these measurements was so great as to form the chief cause in the delay of finishing this paper; for it was no easy matter, notwithstanding the free use of money in the shape of fees, to get the men to submit, much more the women. I am indebted to numerous friends for much help on these occasions; they are too numerous to name here. I made it a point to seek assistance wherever procurable at the time. I have taken the weights and measurements of a large number of tribes in various parts of India, whilst others are still incomplete. As a rule, I do not strike an average until I have obtained the measurements of twenty-five individuals of each tribe.

I have also consulted every work I could lay my hand on which either treated on hill tribes, or on cognate subjects; viz., Captain Harkness's *Description of a singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the summit of the Neilgherry Hills*; *The Antiquities of the Neilgherry Hills, including an Inquiry into the Descent of the Thantawars, or Todas*, by Captain H. Congreve; *Madras Journal of Literature and Science*, No. 32, January to June 1847, p. 77; *The Tribes Inhabiting the Neilgherries*, by a German Missionary; *Goa, and the Blue Mountains*, by Richard F. Burton, Bombay Army; Captain Ouchterlony's *Topographical Report of the Neilgherries*, *Madras Journal of Literature and Science*; Smoult's edition of Bakie's *Neilgherries*; the file of the *Neilgherry Excelsior Newspaper*; *Memoranda of Toda Population*, by the Rev. Mr. Metz, of Kaity; Caldwell's *Comparative Dravidian Grammar*; Major Cunningham's *Bilsa Topes*; Dr. Balfour's *Second Supplement to the Cyclopædia*; Abbé I. A. Dubois' *Description of the Character, Manners, and Customs of the People of India*; *A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos*, by the Rev. W. Ward, etc.

The "Paul Broca's" tables, alluded to in this paper, are coloured plates of the eyes and skin, giving their different shades, and numbered; the former, from 1 to 20; the latter, from 21 to

54. A reference to these plates, according to the particular number, gives at once the colour of the eyes and skin.

In conclusion, my thanks are due to the Rev. W. Taylor, to whom I submitted the manuscript containing that portion of the remarks on the Todas, in Part II, and was glad to find that this gentleman entirely concurred with me in the views expressed. It is but right that I should here state that, since Mr. Taylor had seen the manuscript, I have added several notes to this part.

Part III, on "The Cairns and Cromlechs," was also submitted for Mr. Taylor's opinion, and he was so good as to make a trifling correction to that portion which relates to his own translation, and as the manuscript was returned without a note, I conclude that Mr. Taylor agrees in my views here also.

My thanks are also due to P. Grant, Esq., the Collector of Coimbatore, for the strength of the population, and other information regarding these hill tribes; and lastly, I am greatly indebted to my assistant, Mr. Sub-Assistant Surgeon William Kearney, who had resided some time at Wellington, and had observed a good deal of these tribes. He was thus able to give me information on several points.

#### LIST OF PHOTOGRAPHS ATTACHED.—*Todos.*

Two. —6 × 9.—Groups of males and females, separately; mounted.

Four.—6 × 9.—Ditto, two of single individuals, male and female, and two of groups, separately; unmounted.

Two. —Carte-de-visite size of an old man and young girl, separately.

#### *Kotars.*

One. —6 × 9.—A group, comprising one man and two women; unmounted.

#### *Badagas.*

One. —6 × 9.—Male; unmounted.

#### *Kurumbas.*

Two. —6 × 9.—Groups of men and women, separately; mounted.

One —6 × 9.—Unmounted.

One.—11 × 9.—A Toda mund, showing the huts forming the mund; mounted.

### AN ACCOUNT OF THE TRIBES INHABITING THE NEILGHERRIES.

*Description of the Neilgherries.*—In southern India, stretching between 76° and 77° of east longitude, and 11° and 12° of north latitude, the Neilgherries, or, as they are more literally called, the "Blue Mountains,"—from *Neil*, "blue", and *gherry*, "a hill",—comprise two distinct ranges of hills, which traverse the district of Coimbatore somewhat in the form of a horse-shoe, and blend at one extremity with the Western Ghats. One of these ranges is called the Neilgherry Proper, and the

other, the Koondahs. These hills, on their northern aspect, slope off rapidly into a declivity, which terminates in the broad and elevated plateau of the Wynaad and the Mysore country, a fine and commanding view of which is obtained from some of the higher elevations. Tradition still points to one of these heights as having been used as a watch tower, to scan the movements and operations of the European foe, during our wars with Hyder Ally and Tippoo Sultan. On the Malabar side, the Neilgherries approach the seacoast to within a distance of forty miles; while on the east they are two hundred and thirty miles from the opposite seashore.

Taken together, these two ranges embrace a geographical area extending over 268,494\* square miles, and their summit is greatly diversified by peak and valley, plateau and undulation, in alternate succession. The peaks vary in altitude; the higher of them ranging from 5,000 to 8,000 feet above the level of the sea. Dodabetta, which is the highest peak in Southern India, attains to an elevation of 8,760 feet above the sea, and 1,344 feet above Ootacamund, which is situated in a bowl or basin, sheltered by a surrounding range of low hills. Until recently, an observatory was maintained on the summit of Dodabetta, and meteorological observations were regularly registered.

*Climate of the Hills.*—These hill ranges, from their natural altitude and geographical position, are subject to the influence of both monsoons; and are noted for possessing a climate, which, for mildly invigorating properties and equable seasonal changes throughout the year, is perhaps unrivalled anywhere within the tropics. From the observations of twenty-five months, the annual mean temperature enjoyed on the summit of the Neilgherries has been fixed at  $58^{\circ} 68'$ , a mean that is seldom experienced on any other mountain range in India.†

*Natural Productions.*—The Neilgherries are also remarkable for the wealth and profusion of their natural productions. The sides and slopes of these hills are clad with vegetation, which occurs in irregular patches, and presents, in natural order and description, an ever-changing variety at different elevations. Starting from below, the base is overgrown and concealed by tall grasses, among which the graceful bamboo is ever conspicuous; next in order, large and lofty forest-trees, such as the Saul (*Shorea robusta*), kino (*Pterocarpus Marsupium*), Jack (*Artocarpus integrifolia*), Blackwood (*Dalbergia latifolia*), Teak (*Tec-*

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\* *Vide* Captain Ouchterlony's "Geographical and Statistical Memoir," published in the *Madras Literary Society's Journal*, Jan. to December, 1848.

† *Vide* Bakie's *Neilgherries*, edited by Smoult, p. 7.

*tona grandis*), and others, yielding valuable timber, appear; then follow great belts of low jungle, or *sholas*, in which the tiger, cheetah, bear, wild hog, and other beasts of prey, find a covert retreat; while among the forest-trees the wild elephant roams in lordly majesty. Higher still, ferns in endless variety are met with, associated with the coffee-plant, and further on with the tea-plant, both of which are cultivated on an extensive scale, and promise to yield a harvest from which numerous European settlers hope to realise wealth at no distant period. On the summits of these hills, the Australian tree,—a handsome species of acacia, (*Acacia lophanta*, *Acacia robusta*),—the blue gum (*Eucalyptus saligna*), the poppy, the Neilgherry nettle (*Girardinia Lesschenaultii*), the berberry (*Berberis mahonia*), and other valuable fibre and dye-yielding plants are either indigenous, or have become naturalised to the soil; and of late years the invaluable cinchona has been imported, and its cultivability is now an established fact, as it thrives with vigour, and bids fair to vie with the species produced on the Andes, its mother soil. The hop also has been cultivated on a small scale, and with great success; and, I believe, beer of a good and wholesome kind is manufactured from it. There are also vast varieties of indigenous as well as exotic floral plants, fruits and vegetables, which, for beauty and perfection, are scarcely surpassed by those of more genial latitudes. Among fruits, the grape, plum, apple, peach, pear, and orange, are obtained of a racy kind and flavour; while the strawberry, raspberry, and wild gooseberry (*Rhodo-myrtus tomentosa*)—the latter a myrtaceous plant—grow luxuriantly in all parts. Of vegetables, the potato, pea, turnip, cabbage, cauliflower, beetroot, celery, and parsnip, are produced, of a very superior description, without much care or labour. Wheat, barley, millet, and a variety of pulses, are cultivated. Rice grows, but does not thrive, in the valleys.

*European Sanitaria, or Invalid Stations.*—No sooner were these hills discovered, and their eminent and other climatic advantages known, than Europeans began to establish sanatoria on the more extensive flats, which, at first, were chiefly resorted to by invalids; but at the present time they form stations, whose population, size, and importance, are almost daily increasing. There are at present five sanatoria, or invalid stations, in existence; namely, Ootacamund, which is by far the largest and most frequented; Coonoor, Wellington, the Military Convalescent Depôt; Kotagherry, and Dimhatty.

*Date of Discovery by Europeans.*—It would appear that these hills were first entered by Europeans in 1814, when, it is said, a Mr. Keys, a sub-assistant engineer, and Mr. McMahon, an apprentice of the Survey Department, penetrated into the

remotest parts of the plateau, and sketched portions of it, which were submitted to the Madras Government, accompanied by a report of their discovery.\* Others, however, ascribe their discovery to Messrs. Whish and Kindersley, of the Madras Civil Service, who, it is reported, came upon them by accident in 1819, while in pursuit of a gang of tobacco smugglers; but, whoever may have been the first discoverers, it is not known that Europeans made any attempt to settle on these hills until the year 1820, when John Sullivan, Esq., then collector of Coimbatore, was induced to visit them at the solicitations of the hill tribes, and to this gentleman is due the credit of having built the first house, which, it may be said, formed the nucleus of the large station of Ootacamund, now the most salubrious hill sanitarium in Southern India.†

To Mr. Sullivan is likewise due the credit of having first directed the attention of Government to the fitness of the locality, where Ootacamund now stands, for the establishment of a sanitarium.

*Local Names of the Hill Divisions.*—Amongst the hill tribes, the entire plateau is divided into the four following Naads:—(1) Paranganaad, or Porkhorr, as it was formerly called; (2) Maykanaad, or Khorrerr; (3) Koondanaad, or Mheur; (4) Tudanaad, or Muzzorr.

*General Description of the Tribes.*—There are five distinct tribes found inhabiting these hills, viz.:—(1). Todawars, or Torawurs, who are reputed to be the aborigines, and, it is said, were once clad in leaves, and roamed as free and unrestrained lords of the soil, leading a pastoral nomadic life: (2) Badagas, who, by all accounts, made their appearance on the hills at a later period, and occupied the lower elevations (this tribe engage themselves chiefly in the tillage and cultivation of the soil); (3) Kotars; (4) Kurumbas; (5) Irulas. These three latter tribes are a class of serfs, and each of them is subdivided into minor sects or castes, which in ethnological features, as well as from other points of view, differ somewhat from one another.

*Toda Tribe.*—Todawars, or Torawurs,—the literal name given to herdsmen in the Tamil language,—are the principal tribe, and are believed to be the original inhabitants, as well as the territorial sovereigns of these hill tracts. Not only do the Todas themselves claim this priority of existence and possession, but the right is conceded to them by the other hill tribes,

\* *Vide The Neilgherries*, by R. Bakie, Esq., M.D., edited by W. H. Smoult, 1857, p. 27.

† *Vide Bakie's Neilgherries*, edited by W. H. Smoult, p. 6.

who, in recognition of it, always paid a tribute to their Toda lords, consisting of one-sixth of the produce in kind; but, under the British Government, this practice is being gradually discontinued.

*Intersections of the Toda Tribe.*—The Toda, or Thoddur, tribe consists of five distinct intersections or subdivisions, namely, (1) Peiky; (2) Pekkan; (3) Kuttan; (4) Kenna; and (5) Tody. Like the Hindoos of the plains, these several sects do not intermarry with each other, and their ceremonies, social habits, and customs, differ in several minor points; but unlike the Hindoos, they have no (strictly so called) caste institution, for they freely fraternise, and eat with each other.

*ETHNOLOGY.—Toda Tribe.*—In *physique*, the Todas are by far the most prepossessing, as a tribe; and it is this superiority in personal appearance, in conjunction with their singular costume, peculiar mode of wearing their hair, their bold and self-possessed deportment, and unique social and domestic institutions, that have at all times attracted for them the greatest share of attention and interest from Europeans. In complexion, the Todas are of a dull copper hue,\* not deeper or darker in colour than most of the inhabitants of the plains; but they are darker than the Badagas and many of the Kotars, a few of whom are met with fairer even than the Badagas. The Kurumbas and Irulas are not only darker than the Todas, but strikingly so to the eye. The Todas are tall in stature, well proportioned, and in features partake of the Caucasian type:—*head*, slightly elongated, like the Hindoos; *forehead* rather narrow and receding, measuring  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches from the root of the nose to the growth of hair and scalp; *eyebrows* thick, and approaching each other; *eyes* moderately large, well formed, expressive, and often intelligent,—*irides*, varying in colour from hazel to brown;† *nose*, long, large, and well-formed, generally aquiline,—in some slightly rounded, arched, or what is termed Roman, in others, cogitative, measuring from root to tip  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches, and height from base of alæ to ridge  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch, breadth of alæ from side to side  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inch; *upper lip*, narrow; *lower lip*, thick or full, and face covered with a close thick moustache, whiskers, and beard, all of which are worn full; *ears* of moderate size, and lying close to the skull; *teeth* white, clean, and regular; head well covered with black hair, of moderate fineness, and worn in a peculiar fashion, combed smoothly around from the crown, and cropped evenly in line with the eyebrows,

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\* Agreeing in this respect with Paul Broca's Tables, No. 28.

† The majority being intermediate with Nos. 1 and 2 of Paul Broca's Tables.



and covering the head very much like a natural skull-cap; body of the male, hirsute, especially on back and chest; *figure and contour of person* generally attractive, and carriage graceful. Of twenty-five men, I found the average weight and measurements as follow:—weight, 121·40 lbs.; height, 63·30 inches; circumference of head, 20·81 inches; neck, 12·81 inches; chest, 32·22 inches; arms, 9·36 inches; thighs, 16·64 inches; length of arm from acromion process to tip of fingers, 32 inches; length of hand, 7·50 inches, breadth, 3·50 inches; lower extremities, well proportioned, with moderate calves; feet, well formed and arched; length of foot, 11·50 inches, width of sole, 4 inches.

*Females of the Toda Tribe.*—The women of this tribe are generally tall and stalwart; good-looking both in features and person, with a smooth, clear, and delicate skin; fresh and rather fair in complexion. They have more of an aquiline nose than the men, which, however, does not diminish from the strong feminine cast of their features. The hair is of a lighter colour than in the male, parted in the centre, and carefully combed around and thrown behind the ears, and left hanging free over the shoulders and back, in a mass of flowing curls in some, and in others wavy. I have not seen any of the women with very long hair. In those I met, it did not exceed  $1\frac{1}{2}$  or 2 feet in length, and was of moderate fineness. The females, like the males, are self-possessed in a great degree, and readily enter into conversation with strangers, be they white or black. It has been averred that the Toda females, as a class, are strikingly handsome and comely in features; but although many of them certainly possess charms in person of a robust character, I cannot say that I met with even one with a handsome or pretty face, much less any with features approaching in perfection or beauty to a classical model.

From an average of twenty-five, the following weight and measurements were obtained:—height, 60·25 inches; weight, 110·80 lbs.; circumference of head, 20·8 inches; neck, 11·11 inches; arm, 8·90 inches; chest, 30·11 inches; thighs, 14·6 inches; length of arm, 27 inches; length of hand, 6·75 inches, breadth, 3 inches; forehead, from root of nose to growth of hair on scalp, 2 inches.

The women are tattooed about the arms, chest, and legs, in the following manner:—three semicircles of dots on the outer side of each arm, each semicircle containing nine points; a double row of dots across the upper part of the chest, about an inch below clavicle, each row consisting of 36 points, about one-eighth of an inch apart, the rows themselves being one inch distant from each other,—those on the arms have an in-

tervening space of two inches ; two rows containing eight or nine points each on the shoulders, commencing in front where the lines on the chest terminate, and extending backwards to a point on a level with the superior semicircle on the arm ; a solitary dot in the centre of the chin ; two circular lines of dots on each leg, the upper circle containing twenty-five, and the lower only twenty dots ; and a row across the dorsum of each foot, numbering from nine to eleven points. The terminal point of each row is marked by a ring, the interlinear points being simple dots frequently taking the form of squares.

*Costume.*—Among the Todawar tribe, the costume of both male and female is peculiar, and merits description. In the male, it consists of a piece of cloth, called a “lungooty,” which is passed between the thighs, and fastened at both ends to a piece of string, tied round the waist so as to conceal the organs of generation,—a practice common to all classes of the Indian races, both on the plains and elsewhere. Besides the lungooty, the Todawar tribe wear a stout cotton mantle or toga, which forms their only covering by day and night. This toga is thrown across the right shoulder, overlaps the left arm and trunk, and descends to the knee, thus forming a most simple and rather graceful attire. Unlike the low country tribes, they wear no turban or head-dress, and their feet are always bare. It is the classically elegant toga and unturbaned head that serve to distinguish the Toda tribe so much from the others, and to render them so interesting to the European eye. The toga has latterly been adopted, to a certain extent, by the Badagas and Kotars, as an over-covering by day, and as a bed by night ; and as it is generally of woollen texture amongst them, it serves also to protect them from the inclemencies of the climate.

The toga, as now worn by the Todas, weighs five pounds each.

The Todawar females are also clothed in the same simple style. The toga, or mantle, is the only habiliment used to conceal their naked charms, and it is so wrapped around them as to cover the entire person from shoulder to ankle. Some of them wear a piece of calico around the loins, extending down to the knees, in addition to and under the toga.

*Personal Habits.*—Both males and females, as a class, are very dirty and filthy in their person and habits. They appear to have an antipathy to bathing ; and to make matters worse, they have a practice of anointing their bodies with *ghee* (melted butter), which they rub on their arms, chest, and head ; and as this substance soon becomes rancid, the odour on approaching them is anything but agreeable.

*Ornaments.*—The women of all the tribes manifest a fond-

ness and partiality to wearing ornaments. Their ear rings are made of brass, silver, or iron, and consist of simple chased rings from 2 to 2½ inches in diameter. Necklettes, made of cowrie shells strung together, or small linked metal chains, are also worn, as well as massive brass armlets on the right arm above the elbow, the skin underneath being protected by a band of woollen cloth or leather. Each of these armlets weighs six pounds. Bracelets, made of silver or iron, are worn by some on the forearm above the wrist joint. One or more copper rings filagreeed, and to which a number of charms of various devices are attached, are worn on the left arm above the elbow; and above the left wrist joint there is usually a bracelet of beads. Besides these, a massive girdle or chain of brass or iron encircles the waist. Necklaces of plaited hair or black thread, with bundles of cowrie shells and other charms suspended, are worn by many. Their children are decked out with rows of beads, silver or iron chains, placed around the neck. The men also wear ornaments—small gold rings in their ears, chains of silver around their necks, rings on their fingers; and those well to do, silver wire girdles or waist chains.

*Social, Moral, and Domestic Habits.*—In their habits, these hill tribes are as simple as can be. The Todawars are entirely a pastoral race, and lead a peaceful tranquil life, chiefly employed in tending their cattle. They carry no weapon of offence or defence for protection against enemies of their own kind or wild beasts, except a cowherd's wand or staff, which is made of jungle wood generally, about four feet and a half long with a large knob or head; and on their shoulders they carry a small axe, the handle of which lies against the chest, and the blade rests on the shoulder. While tending their herds, this staff is used as a support to lean upon.

On festive occasions, all the tribes freely fraternise, and participate in the feasting, dancing, and display of animal spirits, by which these social gatherings are usually characterised. Old feuds or dissensions that may have existed between clans or individuals are settled by mutual compromise, and harmonious feeling and friendship are established between all parties on these occasions.

Tobacco smoking is common amongst all the tribes, and many use opium. Of late years, they have taken to drink arrack,\* and most of their women have been debauched by

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\* I have seen a Toda swallow a large glass (claret) of raw brandy, given him by a planter, with the greatest ease, and at one draught, as if it were a glass of water.

Europeans, who, it is sad to observe, have introduced diseases to which these innocent tribes were at one time perfect strangers, and which, as they have no means of curing, are slowly, but no less surely, sapping their once hardy and vigorous constitutions. The effects of intemperance and disease (syphilis) combinedly are becoming more and more apparent in the shaken and decrepit appearance which at the present day these tribes generally present.

If there be one feature more than another that has contributed to invest the Todawar tribe with the great share of interest, or rather curiosity, evinced towards them at all times by Europeans, it is their practice of polyandry, which, as long as they have been known, has been maintained, and is still perpetuated, as a social system among them. Their practice is this: all brothers of one family, be they many or few, live in mixed and incestuous cohabitation with one or more wives. If there be four or five brothers, and one of them, being old enough, gets married, his wife claims all the other brothers as her husbands, and as they successively attain manhood, she consorts with them; or if the wife has one or more younger sisters, they in turn, on attaining a marriageable age, become the wives of their sister's husband or husbands, and thus in a family of several brothers, there may be, according to circumstances, only one wife for them all, or many; but, one or more, they all live under one roof, and cohabit promiscuously, just as fancy or taste inclines. Owing, however, to the great scarcity of women in this tribe, it more frequently happens that a single woman is wife to several husbands, sometimes as many as six. When any one of the brothers or husbands enters the hut, he leaves his wand and mantle at the door, and this sign of his presence within prevents the intrusion of the others. As a direct consequence of this demoralising and revolting practice, prostitution is exceedingly common, while chastity is a rare virtue among Toda women; and the ties of marriage and consanguinity are merely nominal. In keeping with this peculiar marriage system, they adopt a method of affiliation all their own: that is, the first born child is fathered upon the eldest brother, the next born on the second, and so on throughout the series. Notwithstanding this unnatural system, the Todas, it must be confessed, exhibit much fondness and attachment towards their offspring, more so than their practice of mixed intercourse would seem to foster. Of this, I had personal opportunities of satisfying myself when conducting vaccination amongst them: I have frequently seen the Toda mother, on hearing the cries of her child, exhibit marked maternal feeling and distress. There is no doubt that, anterior to the reclama-

tion of these Hills and their occupants from their original state of rude barbarism, female infanticide was practised amongst them; but this hateful crime, it is gratifying to record, has long since become extinct through the active operations of the British Government. It is unknown now, except as a traditional fact of the past, to the truth of which the tribes themselves bear the best testimony. The system adopted in destroying infants, when the practice prevailed, is believed to be that of smothering the new-born child in a dish of buffalo milk.\*

*Internal Economy or Government of their Communities or Societies.*—Among themselves a primitive kind of patriarchal government exists. All disputes and questions of right and wrong are settled either by arbitration or by a Punchayet; *i.e.*, a council of five, whose decision on all matters is considered absolute and binding. The system of adjudication of civil and other rights obtains in all parts of Southern India.

*Language.*—The language of the tribes on the Neilgherries is unmistakably Tamil, although what is now spoken is a mixed dialect, being a jargon of Tamil and Canarese. At first, it is difficult to understand what they say, owing to their peculiar low muttering, rapid utterance and guttural expression; but if close attention be given, and they are made to speak slowly, their language becomes intelligible to any one conversant with both Canarese and Tamil.

Their pronouns and verbs appear to have been derived from the Tamil. Their language is purely oral, and is devoid of any written character or symbol.

*Occupation, Trades, and Employments.*—The sole occupation of the Todawar tribe, as has already been stated, consists in tending their cattle, conducting dairy operations, and building or repairing their huts. They are indolent and slothful, and may be seen sitting listless and inactive for hours and hours together, apparently unconscious of everything around them, and seeking no companionship whatever. The wives are treated by their husbands with marked respect and attention, and, unlike most of the Indian races and natives of the east generally, are not regarded as mere household slaves: they are left at home to perform what European wives consider their legitimate share of duty, and do not even step out of doors to fetch water

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\* The Todas, as a body, have never been convicted of heinous crimes of any kind. They were once given to the habit of abducting young women of their own class; but this habit has been long given up. In the event of an elopement, there was a great deal of excitement for the time, and the fair one was rather pleased than otherwise at the interest displayed in her cause. The affair generally terminated in a lot of loud talk and a feast, and a determination not to say a word about it to the (sircar) authorities.

or wood, which, for domestic or other purposes, is brought to them by one of their husbands. The Toda women employ their leisure hours in embroidery work, which they execute in a clever off-hand manner; others amuse themselves in singing, of which all appear very fond.

*Diet.*—The diet of the Todawar tribe consists of milk, curds, ghee, and the different millets and cereals grown on these hills. It is said that formerly they lived exclusively on the milk of the buffalo, with such roots, herbs, and fruits as the forests produced; but they now make use of rice, wheat, barley, and other grains. They also eat the flesh of the Sambre, deer, and some believe that they eat the flesh of the young buffalo; but my inquiries did not satisfy me that such was the case. The rice is boiled in the usual way. The wheat and other grains are either made into gruel or cakes and thus eaten. They also make use of milk curds and ghee—the latter largely, either mixed with food or by itself. Salt is only made use of occasionally with their food, perhaps once in three or four days.

*Marriage Rites and Wedding Ceremonies.*—Among the Toda marriages are contracted in a style to which, for simplicity and the absence of ceremony, it is difficult to find a parallel elsewhere. Unlike the natives of the plains, youth marriages are not in vogue amongst them; but, like more civilised people, the sexes marry only on attaining the age of puberty. The girls on these hills attain puberty at from thirteen to sixteen years of age, in which respect they do not differ from the low country races. No restriction, in the matter of personal choice and taste, is placed on either sex belonging to the same tribe; but intermarriages with the other tribes are not permitted. The young folks do not at first consult their parents in the matter; but carry on a courtship which is marked by more rusticity and less innocence than is customary with us on similar occasions, and at which the parents wink, if not encourage—a behaviour on their part, we may in charity pronounce as being more venial than culpable, considering their own intense unsophistication. When the season of this indiscreet sort of wooing is over, and the rustic pair are mutually pleased with each other, the successful swain leads the blushing maiden (?) by the hand to her parents, before whom they both prostrate themselves, and solicit their permission to become man and wife. Permission being granted, on the appointed day the girl is led by her parents to the homestead of her future husband, before whom she makes a graceful genuflexion, bowing her head at the same time, and he then places his foot on the fore part of her head.\*

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\* This implies a token of submission. Among Hindoos, when “the disciple approaches his master, he prostrates himself at his feet, and the priest

If there be more brothers than one, they all do the same in turn. This, what we would consider rather irreverent proceeding, is with them, to all intents and purposes, equivalent to the solemn and binding "I will" of our marriage ceremony. The placing the foot on the head is looked upon by them as a token of respect and submission, and is used on other occasions besides marriage. The bride is now asked to perform some trifling household function,—perhaps to cook a meal or fetch some water,—her compliance with which constitutes her mistress of the new dwelling.\* At one time, the bride was taken to the nearest wood, accompanied by the bridegroom and his brothers, who in turn consummated the marriage, after which a meal was prepared and partaken of by all before returning to their mund, where the girl continued to live with them in common. Friends are feasted on the day of their marriage, and a dower, or *pureem*, is paid by the bridegroom to the parents of the bride, which varies in value according to the prosperity of the bridegroom on the occasion. The dower usually averages in value from twenty to fifty rupees, and generally consists of milch buffaloes and household chattels of various descriptions. This marriage tie or contract thus consummated, and which scarcely can be called a ceremony or rite, is not regarded as binding either on the husband or wife; for the husband may, at will or caprice, return his wife to her parents, while she in turn may desert him and select another whom she may prefer.

No particular ceremonies are performed when a woman becomes *enceinte*; but, on the approach of labour, it used to be the custom at one time for a couple of the patient's female friends to accompany her to the nearest wood, rendering such assistance as they could during her confinement. In the meantime, the supposed father received intimation of the fact, and he prepared, for the reception of the mother and child, a temporary hut in the vicinity, to which he conducted them, and tended to their wants for about a month, after which the mother with her child returned to the mund, and rejoined her friends; but the child was carefully concealed from friends as well as strangers for some three months. No medicine is administered to either mother or child; and her food consists of the usual cooked grains, the mother nursing the baby herself. The child is bathed occasionally in warm water. When born, the navel string of the child is either cut with a blunt knife, or broken by the hands of the female friends.

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places his foot on his head".—*Vide Ward's History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos*, p. 43.

\* A similar custom prevails among the Negroes.

*Funeral Rites.*—On a person dying, the corpse is laid out, dressed in new cloths, and decorated with ornaments, such as the deceased possessed, and placed in a bier, which is also decked out with green boughs, twigs, and herbs, and it is thus retained in a state for several days. On the day fixed for the performance of the funeral rites, the bier with the corpse is conveyed on the shoulders of four men, and followed by a train of mourners, composed of the friends and relatives of the deceased, of both sexes and of all ages, the greater portion of whom carry bundles of faggots, or utensils containing ghee, milk, jaggery, and grain, and who chant in a doleful wailing tone an improvised *requiem*, the chief burden of which is the good qualities of the defunct individual. On arriving at the spot where the last offices are to be performed, the procession halts, and the bier is placed on the ground; the mourning relatives and friends now form a circle around it, and, sitting down, continue to wail forth their lamentations, and at the same time constantly throw handfuls of earth or grain towards the corpse. In the meanwhile, the funeral pile is being raised. When completed, the heir or nearest relative of the deceased approaches the corpse, and cuts a lock or two of hair from the head, after which the body, with its decorations undisturbed, is placed upon the pile of faggots, and other faggots are added to it; and while the process of throwing earth and grain at the corpse and the wailing of the mourners are still continued, the pile is set fire to by some near kinsfolk, and the conflagration briskly maintained by the addition of fresh faggots, and the process of cremation is effected as speedily as possible. As the body is being burnt, the relatives of the deceased conceal their heads with their mantles, and continue to weep in audible tones. After the body is completely burnt, and the pile begins to crumble, water is thrown on it, and the fire is quenched; a search is made by the relatives among the ashes for any ornaments, pieces of bone or hair, which may have escaped destruction. These are carefully picked up, tied in old mantle, and preserved as relics of the deceased.

After the performance of a death ceremony, the male members of the family sustaining the loss shave their head and face, and the females shorten their hair. This, however, is only done by the younger members to denote their respect for their seniors. This custom is not observed by all the tribes; some only put aside their personal ornaments for a time. During the period of mourning, visits of condolence are paid by other families to the family of the deceased, who daily continue to chant their lamentations, in which the visitors join. After some days, the grieving family migrates to another mund.

Among the Toda tribe, dead bodies are invariably subjected



to cremation ; and various ceremonies are afterwards performed under the notion that their deity is propitiated, and the well-being of the departed souls thereby secured in the next world. The most important of these is one at which animals are sacrificed, and great concourses of the various tribes assemble. It is usually kept up annually, and consists of feasting, dancing, slaughtering animals, and other ceremonies, extending over several days. At the present day, it is not such an exciting and imposing spectacle as it was formerly. On the first day, this annual funeral ceremony is commenced with dancing. Twenty to fifty men of the tribe open the ceremony by starting off into a kind of dance. They form themselves into ranks of two deep, join hands, and dance round and round, holding their wands in the left hand. They begin with a steady walk, shouting out ha ! hoo ! ha ! hoo ! but the pace soon quickens, the steps become more nimble, and keep time to the unvaried howling tune of ha ! hoo ! which is shouted out faster and louder. The figure of the dance commences by all merely advancing, then crossing their feet, they wheel rapidly round and fall back into files of two and two, slackening their pace into a steady walk ; the step now becomes quicker, and the evolution is repeated. These successive stages are performed without variation and in rapid alternation for a full hour, or longer, during which time those who become fatigued are replaced by others. As this exciting dance is going on, food, consisting of rice and other grains, is being prepared, and when ready, all the friends and invited guests assemble around a hut erected for the occasion by the relatives of the deceased. The men and women sit apart in separate rows, and observe an orderly decorum. The boiled rice and grain of other kinds is served out with ghee, on leafy plates, to each guest, by two Toda men, who act as attenders, and pay particular attention to the female portion of the guests. Inside the hut, over the front door of which some obsolete and current coins are suspended, some of the near relatives of the deceased are seated, serving out rice, etc., to other guests. After the repast is over, the dancing is again resumed by some ; while others, comprising the younger and more active men, proceed to where the buffaloes are penned, to make a selection of the animals intended for the sacrifice. In former times, on the death of a Toda, his entire herd was sacrificed. Men leaped into the pen with their clubs, and the animals were beaten to death at much personal risk, for the Toda buffaloes are strong and fierce, even attacking strangers on their walks, if they incautiously approach too near them. The British government put a stop to this cruel practice of wholesale slaughter ; and at the present day no more than one

or two animals are sacrificed at this annual ceremony. The whole herd was sacrificed in the superstitious belief that they were thus secured to the deceased in the next world.

A similar custom prevailed amongst the ancient Scythians, and, indeed, is adopted by all savage nations,—the sacrifice of a favourite horse, slave, or wife, in the hope that its services would thus be secured in the next world. The Todas believe that, unless this be done, the departed soul will have no peace, and will for ever haunt the place it lived in on earth.\*

At these annual holocausts, the best and most valuable of the herd ought to be sacrificed; but the Todas, growing wise in their generation, select some of the old, barren, and useless animals for this purpose.

The fated animals are dragged by the horns into a ring or pit, which is surrounded on all sides by an embankment, and from thirty to forty yards in diameter; and when all the animals are secure within, the dancing is again commenced, and continued for some time. This terminates the ceremony of the first day.

On the second day, the scene changes to the enclosure where the doomed animals are penned up. While a party is howling and dancing outside the enclosure, another party enters it, and with their club-like staves irritate and torment the animals, who rush about infuriated, confused, and wild, in all directions, sometimes goring their tormentors, and causing accidents of a serious nature. As the animals are running about, two or three of the men adroitly seize them by the horns, spring on to their heads, and cling there. The beasts becoming more excited and infuriated, rush madly around the arena, while the confusion, noise, and excitement of the dancers outside reach their climax. The dance is somewhat different from that of the preceding day. The men arrange themselves in a circle around a long pole,—ornamented at the top, middle, and lower end with cowrie-shells, and held in its place by two men,—and around this pole the dancing goes on for some time, and is followed, as on the previous day, by a repast. After the meal, the ashes of the deceased are mixed with water brought from

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\* An analogous custom obtains at the present day in China, and, for aught we know, might have existed from time immemorial. When a person dies, be he wealthy or otherwise, his household goods, comprising it may be the most gorgeous silk apparel, trinkets, and ornaments of great value, are placed with the corpse in the coffin, and thus interred, so that the cemeteries and sepulchres form literally mines of untold treasure. It is a fact, that not an insignificant part of the valuable booty captured by the French and English in the late expedition (1861) to North China, was obtained by desecrating the mausolei and burial places of the country.

the nearest stream, and sprinkled on the stakes which guard the entrance of the enclosure. The ground in front of the enclosure is broken up, and a new cloth or mantle is spread over it. The mourning kinsfolk and friends approach the spot with their heads and faces concealed under their mantles, pick up handfuls of the loosened earth, which they throw into the enclosure three times, and the same number of times on the cloth, all the while exhibiting demonstrative grief and sorrow. After this, two or three men rush into the enclosure, and drag out, one by one, the fated buffaloes to the front of the newly erected hut. Here they are brought forward separately, securely held by three or four strong men, and struck a powerful blow on the head with a small axe by a kinsman of the deceased, the blow generally proving instantaneously fatal. Sometimes the mantle containing the relics of the deceased is brought to the scene of slaughter, and sprinkled with the blood of the animal first killed, and a requiem sung over it. The carcasses of the animals are dragged to the enclosure of the pit, and their heads laid upon the cloth spread in front of it. The men prostrate themselves on these dead bodies, cry over them, and, in a piteous and rather affectionate manner, fondle, caress, and kiss the face of the animals, in which they are joined by the women, who set up a howling lament, and add to the impressiveness of the scene. The Kotars and Kurumbas come in for the carcasses.

The ceremony of the third and last day consists in simply setting fire to the hut. This is done by the women. The hut, with the slaughtered buffaloes, the Todas firmly believe, are thus safely transferred to the spirit of the deceased in the next world.

The display and expense at these annual ceremonies vary with the means of the families by whom they are commemorated.

*Deities, or objects of worship.*—The Todas have several deities. The principal one is called *Hiriadeva*, or “bell-god”, and is hung around the neck of the best buffalo in their herds, which is an object of worship, and considered sacred. To this deity they offer prayers and libations of milk. Another of their deities is the “hunting god”, to whom they pray for success in their hunting expeditions. The sun is also adored and worshipped as a deity. The Todas believe in the doctrine of transmigration of souls, which is termed by them *Huma Norr*; but they do not appear to have any explicit ideas on the subject. They are a very superstitious people, and have faith in omens and prognostications; and as they give credence to the influence of witchcraft, they are easily imposed upon by the Kurumbas and Irulas, who pretend to practise it.

*Sacred persons and places.*—They have also what are called *tirriari*, or sacred groves, which are inhabited by a class of monks, who are called *palals*, or “milkmen”, to each of whom is attached a *kavilal*, or “watchman”. The *kavilal* performs all the menial offices for the *palal*; and tends the herd of sacred animals attached to each sacred grove or *mund*, which is kept exclusively for the use of these sanctified individuals. The buffalo with the bell, or the chief of the sacred herd, is not milked, its calves being permitted to consume entirely the milk of their dam. Some of these sacred groves have been deserted, and at present there are only three in existence on these hills.

The offices of *palal* and *kavilal* are voluntarily assumed either by married men or bachelors. The choice having been made, and the consent of the neighbours and friends obtained, the candidate throws off his garment as a token of his having entirely renounced the pleasures and enjoyments of the world. He then resorts to a retired and unfrequented part of some forest, and there undergoes the necessary austerities to fit him for his sacred office. A tree, called in their language *Tiarr*, is searched for in the forest, and, when found, the novitiate besmears himself with the juice of the bark, and bathes himself afterwards in a neighbouring stream. This he does several times during the week that he remains in the forest. All this time, he is in a perfect state of nudity, and a scanty supply of parched grain forms his only sustenance. After the expiration of the week, his friends visit and present him with a piece of coarse cloth, which he fastens around his waist, and quits the forest, conducted by the assembled *Todas* of the district to the *tirriari*, and enters on the office of *palal*. After assuming this office, the individuals not only lead a life of sinless retirement, but adopt habits of remarkable simplicity. They are never seen with more than a simple strip of coarse cloth around their waist, and they subsist exclusively on milk yielded by the sacred herd. They do not often leave their retired abodes, where their whole time is spent in unceasing meditation and prayer. Females are not allowed at any time to enter, or even to approach these sacred *munds*; nor can any member of the tribe hold conversation with the holy monk, or his assistant, without special permission being first obtained, and even then the conversation must be carried on from a distance. If any of the tribe chance to meet a *palal* on his way to a village, which, on occasions few and far between, he does visit, the most servile respect is shown to him. The individual who meets him at once prostrates himself or herself, before his sacred presence. All the tribes, even the *Badagas*, respect and fear him. He is

generally avoided, as he is held in superstitious dread; but if the palal condescends to speak to any of the tribe, the person addressed approaches him with awful reverence, bowing and making obeisance with the outspread hand raised to the brow, and anything the palal may ask for is at once given up to him. Altogether, there is no individual who exercises a greater power and control over the minds of these tribes than the palal.

But of late years, the light of civilisation is gradually penetrating and shedding its benign ray on these dark abodes, and its enlightening influence is stealing in perceptible degrees not only over the mind of the self-deceived palal himself, unveiling to his own obscured vision the utter folly and inutility of all his self-imposed and austere practices; but it is no less operating also on the minds of the deluded tribes whom he has hitherto held spell-bound; for they do not so blindly believe that this personage either possesses the spirit of God, or any supernatural power of revealing the divine will, which in remote years was believed implicitly by them.

These Toda monks never accumulate any property for themselves or for their family. Any funds that they may receive are laid out in the purchase of other buffaloes for the tirriari.

In each tirriari, or grove, are two huts,—one for the palal, the other for the kavilal; an enclosure, or *tuel*, for the sacred herd of buffaloes: a separate hut for the calves; and a small conical thatched building, intended for a temple, in which one or more bells are placed.

The ceremony for the initiation of the kavilal is somewhat similar to that described for the palal; but is less rigorous, and lasts for a shorter time. He lives in a separate hut, and does not associate in any way with the palal.

Both the palal and kavilal may resign their offices by giving a month's notice; but should they wish to resume them again, they cannot do so except by undergoing a second time the necessary ceremony.

Donations and offerings of different value and kind are not unfrequently made to these sacred groves by not only the Toda, but by all the other tribes. These gifts comprise milch buffaloes or heifers, which are added to the sacred herd, and cloths similar to those worn by the palal.

Besides the palal, there is another kind of religious functionary, who is called the *poojarg*, or “village priest”. To undertake this office, it is necessary that the candidate should isolate himself from his family and friends, and resort to some jungle, where he must remain for two days and nights, stripped to the skin, and exposed to all the severities of the climate. To enable him to bear these, the bark-juice of the tiarr-tree is

smear all over his body, which subserves the double purpose of protecting his frame from the cold as well as purifying it. On the third day, after bathing, he is permitted to shelter himself in a hut, where he remains for thirty days, which completes the qualifications necessary to constitute him *Varshaly*. During this time, he is attended by a menial, who is selected from his own tribe, called a *Tarvaly*, and who resides in a separate hut.

The duty of the *varshaly* is to conduct all the dairy operations of the village. He is not permitted to touch the milk, but may have as much ghee as he may require. The engagement for this office is usually limited, and may terminate on the person employed giving a month's notice. Sometimes there is a kind of deputy attached to the person of the *varshaly*, who is called *Kurpally*. All these offices are remunerative, the incumbents receiving gifts of one or more buffaloes.

The dairy operations of a village are regarded by these tribes as the most sacred of all work, and are performed only at stated times. The milk is usually drawn before sunrise, and again after sunset; and, when concluded, the process of converting the curds into butter, and this again into ghee, is proceeded with. The ghee is not only eaten, but is also used for burning in their lamps, and as an unctuous application to their head and other parts of the body.

*Religion.*—Considered as a whole, the Toda religion forms a confused compound of overwhelming superstition and ignorance, with paganism as its fundamental constituent. The Todas are not practical idolaters, nor have they any definite notions of their symbolical objects or places of worship. Their dairy buffaloes and bell are fused into an incomprehensible mystic whole, or unity, and constitute their prime object of adoration and worship.

*Villages and Hamlets.*—A *mund* or *mott* is the term used to designate a hamlet or village by the Toda tribe. Each *mund*, or hamlet, usually comprises about five buildings or huts, three of which are used as dwellings; one as a dairy, and the other for sheltering the calves at night. These huts or dwellings form a peculiar kind of oval, pent-shaped construction, usually 10 feet high, 18 feet long, and 9 feet broad. The entrance, or doorway, into this building measures 32 inches in height, and 18 in width, and is not provided with any door or gate; but the entrance is closed by means of a solid slab or plank of wood from 4 to 6 inches thick, and of sufficient dimensions to entirely block up the entrance. This sliding door is inside the hut, and so arranged and fixed on two stout stakes, buried in the earth, and standing to the height of 2½ to 3 feet, as to be easily moved to and fro. There are no other

openings or outlets of any kind, either for the escape of smoke or for the free ingress and egress of atmospheric air. The doorway itself is of such small dimensions that, to effect an entrance, one has to go down on all fours, and even then much wriggling is necessary before an entrance can be effected. The houses are neat in appearance, and are built of bamboo closely laid together, fastened with rattan, and covered with thatch, which renders them water tight. Each building has an end walling before and behind, composed of solid blocks of wood, and the sides are covered in by the pent roofing, which slopes down to the ground. The front wall, or planking, contains the entrance or doorway. The inside of a hut is from eight to fifteen feet square, and is sufficiently high in the middle to admit of a tall man moving about with comfort. On one side there is a raised platform, or pial, formed of clay, about two feet high, and covered with sambré or buffalo skins, or sometimes with a mat. This platform is used as a sleeping place. On the opposite side is a fireplace, and a slight elevation on which the cooking utensils are placed. In this part of the building, faggots of firewood are seen piled up from floor to roof, and secured in their place by loops of rattan. Here also the rice-pounder, or pestle, is fixed. The mortar is formed by a hole dug in the ground seven to nine inches deep, and rendered hard by constant use. The other household goods consist of three or four brass dishes or plates, several bamboo measures, and sometimes a hatchet. In one hut I found an old table-knife, two empty beer-bottles, and a broken goblet.

Each hut or dwelling is surrounded by an enclosure or wall, formed of loose stones piled up two to three feet high, and includes a space or yard measuring thirteen feet by ten feet.

*Dairy or Temple.*—The dairy, which is also the temple of the mund, is sometimes a building slightly larger than the others, and usually contains two compartments, separated by a centre planking. One part of the dairy is a sort of storehouse for ghee, milk, and curds, contained in separate vessels. The outer apartment forms the dwelling-place of the poojary, or dairyman, who is sometimes called the varshaly. The doorways of the dairy are of smaller dimensions than those in the dwelling-huts, being twenty-four by eighteen inches. The dairy, or temple, is usually situated at some small distance from the habitations, and strangers never attempt to approach too near it, for fear of incurring the ill-will of the deity who is believed to preside within. This belief is general among all the tribes. Females are excluded; and the only parties who are free to come and go are the boys of the family. The flooring of the dairy is level, and at one end there is a fireplace.

Two or three milkpails, or pots, are all that it usually contains.

The huts where the calves are kept is a simple building, somewhat like the dwelling huts.

These munds are usually situate in well-selected romantic looking spots, where woodland, streamlet, and lawn combine to render the landscape picturesque and attractive. There are at the present day one hundred and six Toda munds, or hamlets, in existence on the Neilgherries.

*Cattle and Cattle Pens.*—In the vicinity of the munds are the cattle-pens, or *tuel*, which are circular enclosures, surrounded by a loose stone wall with a single entrance, guarded by powerful wooden stakes. In these the herds of buffaloes are kept at night. Each mund possesses a herd of these animals. The milk obtained from them is converted into ghee, part of which is reserved for domestic purposes, while the remainder is bartered to the low country tribes for other articles.

The hill buffalo differs from the kind met with on the plains, and appears to be a peculiar species, indigenous to these hills alone. They are exceedingly powerful in build, and long in carcass. They have scarcely any hump; the chest is broad and deep; the legs short and sturdy; the head large and heavy, and surmounted by horns set wide apart, and curved differently to those of the animals seen on the plains, the points being recurved inwards, outwards, and forwards. The whole of the herds presented this feature. They carry their heads low, and from this peculiar curvature of the horns, it gives them at first sight a bull-dog appearance. Along the crest of the neck, hump, and back, there is a thick growth of hair like a mane, which imparts a bison-like appearance to these animals. They are known to be fierce, and rather dangerous animals to approach incautiously. At sight of a stranger they throw up their heads and run back for some distance, when they abruptly halt and turn towards the object of their fears, at whom they fiercely stare with heads erect; then cautiously advance and retire, and gather together in a compact serried mass prepared for attack. At other times, the whole herd start suddenly into an impetuous rush, with their heads carried low, and overrun, gore, or trample to death the object that has excited their anger.

In this manner tigers, and other beasts of prey, are often kept at bay, or killed by the simultaneous rush of the animals.

The system of inbreeding accounts for the remarkable similarity of appearance about the horns, so characteristic of these animals.

They are good milkers, yielding daily from five to nine



quarts of very rich well-flavoured milk. Beyond this, they are turned to no use whatever.

Of late years, the Toda buffaloes have become subject to murrain and other diseases, and, what with the number that is annually sacrificed, these fine animals are fast diminishing. It is to be hoped that they will not become extinct.

The cows are milked both at night and in the morning; but the principal dairy operation is conducted before sunrise.

The best animal is selected to carry the *Hiriadeva*, or the Toda's bell-god. This office is made hereditary, and descends in uninterrupted succession from cow to calf.

The *tuel*, or pen, is a circular enclosure, varying in size according to the number comprising the herd. It is generally located in some sheltered spot, and embanked to the height of three or four feet. During the rains, the windward side of the pen is bushed with brushwood to protect the herd from the cold and piercing winds.

These pens having no covering above, the cattle are exposed at all seasons to the rains and sun, while the floor is covered with the accumulation of their own droppings. The young calves, however, prior to being weaned, are very carefully looked after, and kept under shelter at all times of the year. During the day the calves either accompany their dams, or are grazed separately, under the care of an attendant.

Towards evening, the herd is driven back to the *tuel*, when such of the male and female members of the family as are present assemble and make obeisance to the animals, by bowing and raising the open right hand to the brow, resting the thumb on the ridge of the nose, after which the animals are shut in for the night.\*

The Todas keep no other animals, except, perhaps, a cat or two, for the purpose of destroying the rats and other vermin that infest the villages in great numbers.

*Nature of Diseases and Ailments.*—These hill tribes are subject to a variety of diseases; but they manifest the greatest susceptibility to attacks of fever, rheumatism, and smallpox.

Since the introduction of vaccination, the objects and benefits of which they now understand and appreciate, the latter disease has not been so prevalent.

The fever from which they suffer is generally of a malarious type, either of the intermittent, remittent, or typhoid varieties.

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\* The Todas hold grazing lands on favourable terms from the Government; but, at the same time, they receive a certain sum from Government for the lands now comprising the station of Ootacamund, which originally belonged to them. This has been received by them from Mr. Sullivan's time.

Of late years, the venereal disease is also met with. One case that I examined, which the patient confessed having contracted from his own tribe, presented gonorrhœa, chancre, and buboes. Ophthalmia and cataract are commonly seen, and perhaps caused in a great measure by their smoky, ill-ventilated habitations. When an outbreak of smallpox or other epidemic occurs in any of their hamlets, the inhabitants who escape from its ravages remove to another mund or village, of which each clan keeps several, leaving the sick to be attended to by a few persons who have once had the disease.

They do not appear to have any knowledge of medical drugs or of the treatment of disease, nor are they often known to seek the aid or advice of their European neighbours ; but when assistance is offered to them gratuitously, they receive and appear to appreciate it.

*Alleged scarcity of Offspring.*—It is a common belief that the women of the Toda tribe are not prolific, and this has been supposed to be connected with their polyandrous marriage system in relation of cause and effect. But this I am inclined to doubt, as, from personal inquiry, I am satisfied that the females individually bear as many as from four to twelve children. It is true that a large number of children is rarely seen in the same family ; but this, in my opinion, is owing to the climate of the hills being inimical to infantile life. In infancy, the mortality is known to be very great, not only among the natives, but also among the Europeans ; and if there be a slight difference in favour of the latter, it is easily and satisfactorily accounted for when we contrast the superior advantages possessed by Europeans, on the score of physical stamina, hygiene, regimen, habits, and mode of life, with the wretched condition of the natives, who are poor, ill-fed, badly clothed, and living in hamlets defective in sanitation, together with early marriages and child-bearing, prolonged lactation, and excess of venery resulting from their system of polyandry. Abortions and premature births are of frequent occurrence, and are attributable to the same causes.

Both the men and women of the Toda tribe exhibit strong parental feeling and attachment to their offspring, whom, in tender age as well as in sickness, they carefully tend and cherish.

*Legends.*—I was unable myself to trace the existence of any legendary stories or traditions among these tribes, whereby some clue might be obtained as to their past history and true origin.

The Rev. Mr. Metz, in his *Tribes Inhabiting the Neilgherries*, relates a long story concerning two brothers of the Toda tribe,

who, it is said, fell out, and parted on their way down to the low country. The story goes on to say that one of the brothers met some fairy birds, who reproached him for having quarrelled with his brother, when, being seized with remorse and conscience-stricken, he prayed to the ruling deity for the restoration of his brother, which was granted. Some time afterwards the same brother, feeling weary of his life, miraculously disappeared through the agency of the fairies, leaving his brother to perform his funeral rites, and who, on its completion, undertook a pilgrimage to the mountain-tops, and “has never since been heard of.” Mr. Metz adds, that he was probably carried off by wild beasts. This fiction, however, as a legend of the past, possesses but little interest, as it throws no light whatever on the bygone times of these singular tribes, who are so enveloped in doubt and mystery as to leave their true origin and past history debatable questions to the present day.

TODA NAMES FOR HILLS.

Cairn Hill.	Kell Cod.
Fern Hill.	Poonthut.
Rhode Hill.	Nurrigal vem.
Mount Rose.	Oothut.
Makoortee Hills.	Caave and Carreen.
Name for Cairns—	Phins.

The following list will give an idea of the population of the munds generally :—

		Huts.		Men.		Women.		Children.
Kandal mund	...	4	...	10	...	4	...	9
Mungearlu „	...	3	...	4	...	3	...	6
Koodthoo „	...	2	...	9	...	7	...	7
Minkeshole „	...	2	...	3	...	3	...	4

The collector gives the Toda munds as 106 huts, and a population of 704. In Captain Ouchterlony's memoir, they are given as 85 and 337, respectively, in 1847; from which it will be seen that, during the last twenty years, there has been an increase of 21 munds and 337 inhabitants.

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PART II.—REMARKS.

Ever since the first discovery of the Neilgherries, and throughout the half century nearly that they have now been occupied by Europeans, considerable curiosity and interest have been manifested towards the singular native tribes who pre-existed on these hill-ranges from a very remote period, the starting-point of which, however, has never been definitely traced, and remains still an unravelled mystery. Not a few

theories and conjectures have been advanced from time to time by writers interested in the subject. Some of these have not been wanting in ingenuity, nor deficient in facts, both new and interesting, relative to the social habits and customs, religion, and language of these tribes; yet the exact date and mode of their settlement on the hills cannot be considered to have been set finally at rest by any of the evidentiary facts which have hitherto been brought forward.

Nor is it in the least degree surprising that the inquiry should be beset with so much difficulty, considering that, up to this time, but few traditional records or vestiges, in the shape of monuments and coins, have been found to exist among them, by which additional light might be thrown on the subject; for the discovery of such, in researches of this nature, always affords valuable aid in clearing up dubious points in the past history of all human races, and which, were it not for their existence, might ever remain as unsolved problems.

Some writers affirm that the Neilgherries have been peopled from time immemorial, the Todawar tribe being regarded as a remnant of the aboriginal race. This idea appears to have had its origin from the fact of this tribe itself claiming sovereignty of the soil, and their right to it being admitted by all the other tribes. Others, led away by the discovery of a few *cromlechs* and *cairns*, the alleged superior physical development, peculiar habits and customs, and attractive costume of the Todawar tribe, claim for them an ancestral origin which entirely disconnects them from any of the Dravidian races of Southern India, and pretend to trace their progenitors in the ancient Scythians, who, it is said, emigrated from some part of Central Asia, and settled on these hills at some very remote period. But, as identical stonecut antiquities have been opened up in numerous other parts of the plains of India, and the hill-tribes themselves disclaim all connexion with these relics, the fact of their simple discovery on the hills does not, in my humble opinion, warrant such a far-fetched idea.\*

The notion, also, that the Todawar tribe present any special peculiarities in their habits and customs, language, and religion, costume, or ethnological features, is, I apprehend, when carefully analysed, and compared with those of the other Indian races, more imaginary than real.

The Rev. Mr. Metz asserts his belief that these hill-tribes originally came from some place in the north-east, and endeavours to trace an affinity between them and a race of people

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\* For these cairns are met with in all parts of Southern India, both on the hill plateau and plains.

inhabiting the mountainous district of Collegal,\* in the Coimbatore district, who, he makes out, emigrated thither at the same time that the hill-tribes settled themselves on the Neilgherries. Captain Harkness, in his *Description of a singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the summit of the Neilgherries*, narrates the following traditionary account, which I here insert in his own words :—

“They have some tradition bearing reference to a period about the time of Ravan, when they say they inhabited the low country. One among these is that their forefathers were the subjects of Ravan; and that, being afterwards unable to bear the severities imposed upon them by the successful Ravan, they fled to these mountains as a place of refuge, driving their herds before them, carrying their females and children on their shoulders, and vowing to wear no covering on their heads till they had wreaked their vengeance on their oppressors. But I doubt the genuineness of all these stories, and imagine they have gathered them from some of their Hindoo neighbours.”†

This local tradition, imperfect as it is, and notwithstanding its being somewhat arbitrarily repudiated by the narrator himself, contains, in my humble impression, the only reliable clue to the true origin and past history of the Neilgherry tribes, forming in this respect a solitary exception, on the score of veritableness, in the mass of evidence heretofore advanced; and this opinion I submit after a careful and strict analysis and comparison of every point of alleged dissimilarity in ethnology, language, religion, social habits, and customs, whereon have been based, apparently, the several hypotheses which pretend to establish, in whole or in part, an origin for the hill-tribes isolated and distinct from that of the Hindoos of the plains. Having investigated for myself, and taken considerable interest and pains in the subject of ethnology, as it concerns the various aboriginal races found scattered in the mountainous regions of Southern India, such as the Shervaroy Hills, hill tracts of Orissa and Carnatic, where I had frequent opportunities of observing the peculiarities of several of these tribes, I am enabled to make an extended comparison between them and the tribes upon whose origin I venture now to make a few comments in the present paper.

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\* “They must, perhaps, have for centuries inhabited a range lying to the north-east, in the direction of Hassanoor beyond the Gazelhutty Pass. Part of the tribe appears to have settled in a northerly direction, near Collegal, for I am frequently pressed to go to visit them, and bring back intelligence respecting their condition in life.”—*Tribes Inhabiting Neilgherries*, etc., p. 14.

† *A Description of a singular Aboriginal Race inhabiting the summit of the Neilgherry Hills*, by Captain H. Harkness, pp. 24 and 25.

The hill tribes, I affirm, are obviously allied by many affinities of language and common characteristics of religion and customs with the Dravidian races of the South of India, with whom, I believe, they have had a common origin, and are neither Scythians nor Romans, nor indigenous aborigines of the hills they now occupy. They are like the other half-savage races met with on all the low ranges of hills in Southern India,—the remnants of a population who once occupied the plains of India, overrun by successive invasions of superior races, before whom they were driven forward for shelter to their present respective mountainous habitats, and where, as regards the Neilgherry tribes in particular, under the influence of altered physical conditions and a cold and bracing climate, they acquired a hardihood of constitution and improved physique, at the same time that their customs, language, and religion retained their primitive rude and uncultivated characteristics as a necessary result of their long-continued sequestration on these mountainous retreats.

This opinion appears to be borne out by the testimony of ancient native historians as well, who divided Southern India into two great provinces, which they respectively termed *Chola Mundalum* and *Toda Mundalum*. The extent of the former was included between the two rivers Cauvery and Palar, while the latter embraced all the territory that lay to the north of the Palar to the Ponnary. The latter, it is said, was occupied by a barbarous race of people, who did not even understand how to cultivate the soil, and were solely a pastoral race, possessing large herds of cattle, with which they itinerated from jungle to forest in search of pasture, and subsisted entirely on the produce of their herds. The Chola Mundalum province, on the other hand, was inhabited by a superior race, who boasted of a regular dynasty of kings, the son of one of whom, *Adondai*, invaded the Toda Mundalum\* country, and rapidly brought the barbarous hordes who occupied it under his subjugation and rule. It is possible, if not very probable, that the Neilgherry Todawars are a remnant of this ancient population. At any rate, the description of the Toda Mundalum race and their mode of life, find a verisimilitude in that of the Todawars of the present day.

I will now proceed to make a few summary observations on the several alleged distinctive features, real or fallacious, which

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\* *Tonda Mundalum*: “*Tondai*, or with the addition of *Mundalum*, a province’, ‘a country’, of which Canjipuram (Conjeveram) was the ancient capital, takes its designation from a shrub of the same name with which it abounds.”—Ellis’s *Mirasi Rights*, p. 51.

have led some authors to ascribe an origin and past history to these Neilgherry tribes, that appear to militate against the idea of their being descended from a common parent stock with the Dravidian races of the plains.

First, as to physical appearance, the only tribe on the Neilgherries which can be said, as a body, to show a better appearance and physique than the races on the plains are the Todawars; but this comparative superiority on the part of this tribe does not hold true as regards every race met with on the plains, for I have seen many of the latter equally well developed in bone and muscle, and not less good-looking in features than the Todas; for instance, the *Marawars* and *Augumbadiers* of the south, and the *Telugus* of the north.\* Among the latter, some excellent specimens of the true Caucasian type of features are to be met with. But, judging by actual measurements and weight, this alleged superiority, I opine, vanishes altogether, or exists only in a very slight degree, which, considering the advantages on the score of climate and diet enjoyed by the Todawars, is not at all surprising.

The superiority of the Todas at present consists in age, size of chest, arms, and weight only; but when we take into account the difference of from one to thirteen years existing between the average age of the Todas and that of the other tribes, we must allow that, with age, the weight and proportions of different parts of the body will increase also, which consideration confirms the observation, that the superiority of the Todas is more apparent than real in their physical conformation; and this will appear more clearly when measurements of men of *equal* age are taken, for it must be admitted that such increase will take place in most, if not all, of the tribes enumerated here.

This superiority of the Todas, I imagine, is in truth more a deceptive impression, produced by the combined effect of their graceful costume, self-possessed deportment, unturbaned heads, and peculiar mode of wearing the hair—when contrasted with the inelegant attire, distasteful head-dress, and style of hair-dressing, of the native of the plains,—which have so much pleased the European eye, and thus originated the idea of the Todawar's physical superiority. This opinion may be easily demon-

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\* Dr. Nash, in a *Report* to the Inspector-General, Indian Medical Department, gives the following description of the Coorgs :—"The Coorgs and the Amma Coorgs are of the same tribe. Head, decidedly Caucasian; regular features; frequently an aquiline nose and well chiselled lips; eyes and hair dark; wear whiskers and moustaches, but chin shaved; complexion, fair; countenance, intelligent; and general deportment bold and independent."

strated by divesting a Toda of his classically elegant toga, and making him wear in lieu the *cummerbund* and *turban* in the unseemly style of the low country native,—or, in the case of the female, by concealing her flowing curls of hair,—and then it will readily be seen that the Todawar, male or female, is not a whit better looking, after all, than the less gracefully attired native of the plains.\*

Their easy deportment before strangers, great self-possession, and utter fearlessness,—features which have been noticed as equally common to the female as the male Toda,—have been brought forward with some stress in proof of their being descended from a different origin to that of the natives of the plains; but the natives of this tribe did not appear to me to possess these qualities in a more striking degree than what might be expected to exist naturally in a race of people who were once acknowledged liege lords of the soil they now occupy, and who have been living, for some ages, in a hardy mountain clime, and leading an independent pastoral life. I cannot avoid giving expression to the suspicion, moreover, that these same qualities have been enhanced greatly by the kind, and almost favouring, treatment this tribe has ever received at the hands of Europeans, everyone of whom, on their first arrival at Ootacamund, never fail to visit their munds in the vicinity, and distribute donations among their interesting inhabitants.

In costume again, the Todawar tribe is the only one presenting a peculiarity. They differ in this respect from the natives of the plains, in so far that the head-dress or the turban of the latter is eschewed. Like them, however, the Todawars wear the *lungooty*, or small waist-cloth; and instead of the larger folds of drapery worn round the pelvis by the natives of the plains, this tribe have adopted the toga, or mantle, which, from its stout texture and the manner in which it is made to envelop or cloak the entire body, is evidently a modification of attire necessitated by the colder and severer climate in which they reside. The turban is not universally eschewed amongst this tribe, as is believed; for I have met with some who do wear it, apparently the more well-to-do Todawars. The great scarcity of cotton fabrics on the hills, perhaps, first led them to abandon this head-dress, the temperate nature of the climate permitting them to do so with perfect impunity. The Khonds and Baboos of Bengal, the Nairs of Malabar, and

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\* "The superiority of the Toda, in form and features, to the inhabitants of the low lands, may also be partially owing to the improvement in bodily strength, stature, and general appearance, that would be effected by a lengthened sojourn in the pure climate of the Blue Mountains."—*Goa, and the Blue Mountains*, by Rich. F. Burton, Lieut. Bombay Army, 1851, p. 345.



other abject tribes on the western coast, go about bareheaded, like the Todas.

As regards language, the hill tribes cannot be said to possess a distinct language of their own; for that which is spoken by them is a mixed dialect of Tamil, Canarese, and Telugu, corrupted and modified somewhat by their sequestered life and want of more frequent associations with the other Dravidian races, amongst whom these tongues are preserved in their pristine purity and pronunciation.\*

The same long-continued seclusion of the hill tribes also accounts for the few slight differences that are found to exist in their *social habits and customs* when compared with those of the races on the plains. Like the Hindoos, each of these hill tribes is subdivided into several intersections, who, like the caste sections of the former, do not intermarry with each other, and observe slight differences in their ceremonial and religious performances, at the same time that the institution of caste in its true Brahminical forms is not recognised amongst them. But no more did caste belong to the Hindoos originally: its origin is of a recent date, probably about the period when the priestly order came first into existence and the Brahmins became the dominant race, who, to render the line of demarcation between themselves and the conquered races an effectual barrier to any intercrossing connections being formed, established these elaborate artifices, so that the absence of caste in the hill tribes does not negative the theory of their having had a common origin with the Hindoos. It cannot be denied, however, that the Hill tribes, in a few of their habits and ceremonial customs, contrast somewhat with the Hindoo races on the score chiefly of simplicity and primitive character—for instance, in their marriage celebrations; but this dissimilarity does not exist in a greater degree than what might be expected, considering that, while the one has remained in almost its

\* "There is no doubt of the Toda belonging to the Dravidian stock of languages, agreeing more with Tamil than any of the others, being simply a corruption of the Tamil language as spoken by the lower classes—40 per cent. belonging to the Dravidian, and 67 per cent. being the result of corruptions so completely transformed that their connexions cannot now be traced. The pronouns, numerals, first and second person of its verbal inflexions, prove this, beyond doubt, being most allied to Tamil."—*Vide Caldwell's Comparative Grammar.*

"It has been proved, by the Rev. — Schmidt's *Vocabulary of the Toda Tongue*, that the Toda language is an obsolete dialect of the Tamil, containing many vocables directly derived from Sanscrit, but corrupted into words so debased and hard, no stone is hard enough to touch them on."—*Goa and the Blue Mountains*, by Richard F. Burton, Lieut. Bombay Army, 1851; *vide p.* 343.

original state of rude barbarism and rural innocence, the other came long ago under the metamorphosing influence of civilisation.

In regard to *Polyandry*, which is in existence to this very day amongst the Todawar tribe, it is a system which has long prevailed in many parts of India under various phases, not only in several parts of Southern India, but in Thibet, the Himalayas, Coorg, Ceylon, Travancore, and Malabar, and Canara, variously modified ;\* for instance, among the *Marawars* of the South, a man may marry one or several sisters together, and, although it is not the rule, it is made a matter of convenience. Polygamy in a great variety of cases is common enough among the higher and more civilised classes of the Hindoo races. The marriage tie is also equally lax in principle, and is often disregarded and broken among them as in the Hill tribes ; but the practice of allotting one wife to all the brothers of a family forms more a rule among the Todawar tribe than others. From the Scriptures, we learn that the Jews were directed† to raise seed for a defunct brother by cohabiting with his widow, to descend successively to the several brothers of the family.‡ Persians marry with their mothers, sisters, and daughters.§

Polyandry received a partial sanction in the Institutes of Menu, as the following extract, translated from the Mahabarat, will testify :—

How *Dropudi* became the wife of the brothers *Pandu*.—“The Pandavas were residing at *Ekacha kranagaram* (Oude) in disguise as beggars with their mother ‘*Kuntidevi*.’ Rajah ‘*Drubada*’ made a vow that he would give his daughter *Dropudi* in marriage to the best archer, and with that view opened a ‘*Sivayam Varam*’ (competitive examination) to all candidates at *Panchala* (Punjaub), the seat of his government. A machine was set up called *Jala Enthram*, which consisted of a wooden wheel placed at the top, and which wheel was provided with a box on its axle, through which the archer had to take aim, and shoot his arrow when the wheel was in a rotatory motion, marking the shadow of a fish in a tub of water below,

\* *Vide* Balfour’s second Supplement to the *Cyclopædia*, article “Polyandry,” pp. 106-111. Nayumars or Nayuer women enjoy a plurality of husbands in Malabar. *Vide* Abbé Dubois’ *Description of the Character, Manners, and Customs of the People of India*.

† Deuteronomy xxv, 5.

‡ I find that the Brahmins, Ketheres, Curnums, and Paiks of Jeypore, Vizagapatam district, do not allow their widows to re-marry, but they *are taken in concubinage by the younger brothers*.

§ Origen asks Celsus, in an ironical way, if Persians are not a godlike race !

without looking at the substantive object above. Among others, the Pandavas, disguised, went to the *Sivayom Varam*, and *Arjunen*, one of the five brothers, won the day by effectually discharging the arrow at the wooden fish placed at the top of the revolving wheel above described. Drubada (the Rajah) then gave his daughter in marriage to Arjunen, and celebrated the ceremony with great solemnity. The bride was brought home by the Pandavas; and, on arrival, they told their mother Kuntidevi, before showing her the bride, that they had brought a rare object, and wished her orders. In reply, the mother said, 'share it equally among you five brothers.' They then showed Dropudi, when the mother said, 'it is left to you to act up or not to your promise.' They then agreed between themselves to observe the directions of their mother, and from that time Dropudi was considered the common wife of all five brothers.

"Some time after, *Narada Mahumunee* (great saint) came to the Pandavas, and in the course of conversation recited various anecdotes wherein disputes had arisen in consequence of one female being placed common to several persons, and advised that the five brothers should reside with Dropudi by turns, whereupon it was resolved that Dropudi should reside as the exclusive bride for one year with each brother, so that each had his turn as husband in five years. It was likewise determined upon that, in the event of any one of the brothers, other than he who was considered the lawful husband for the year, entering the room when they (the husband and Dropudi) were together, the trespasser was to go on a pilgrimage to bathe in sacred rivers for one whole year to purge away the sin. Such a fate befel Arjunen during Durmarajah's turn."

Polyandry\* also existed from time immemorial in the Cashmere valley, in Thibet, and in the Sevalik mountains. It is also said to exist in Sylhet and Cachar. In the present day the women of Thibet have three or four husbands, and are as jealous of them, it is said, as a Turk polygamist. Major Cunningham remarks that, among the Botis of Ladak, polyandry is strictly confined to brothers; each family of brothers, like the Todas, having only one wife common to them, and the number of husbands varying from two to four.† Among the

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\* V. H. Levinge, Esq., late Collector of Madura, told me, some time ago, that polyandry existed in the Cumbum valley of that district, and I find that such is the case; but what once formed the rule is now the exception, nevertheless it is recognised as an institution among the Kappaliar caste people, and it does exist as such.

† "Among their social customs the—to our ideas—most revolting system of polyandry is almost universal. The brothers of a family have only one

natives of Alpine Bengal, the custom prevails of marrying one woman to a family of brothers.\* The Hindoos believe that their women are visited by the gods; an instance of this also can be traced to the Panduran kings. The Pandu Rajah, the father of the five heroes, was the son of *Viasea* and *Pandea*; his wife *Kunti* was a princess of *Mathura*. Kunti was sterile, which was attributed to the sins of her ancestors; but she, anxious to overcome the stigma of being barren, with a charm enticed the gods to her bed and begat five sons.

The Chumars of Kumaon still practise polyandry. But, to return to the South, polyandry prevailed among various castes in Southern India, and it was not confined to the Todas alone. In these instances, the system perhaps was somewhat modified to suit circumstances; thus, the *Thotigars* allowed the woman of a particular *Gotra* (family) to cohabit with any individual of that *Gotra*, whilst the Todas allowed only the brothers of a family to have one woman in common. The *Sudras* of *Malayalum* allowed their women to cohabit with men of their own or of a higher caste. In addition to the practice above-mentioned, the *Thotigars* practise a different ceremony, namely, prostituting their wives during the festival of *Soobramuniya* in the fulfilment of certain vows. Their wives are placed in solitary huts on the roadside, and the husbands watch for travellers, and beg of the first person met with to go in and cohabit with his wife. This is carried out to the number they have stated in their vows, and until that number is completed they bring their wives again and again to the locality, until the number of strangers has been procured.

Among the *Vellalah* caste, in the Coimbatore district, it was the common practice, I believe, for the father of a family to live in incestuous intercourse with his own daughter-in-law during the period that his son, the youthful husband, was in nonage, the offspring of such intercourse being affiliated on the latter. On his arrival at the age of puberty, his wife and her children were transferred to him.†

wife amongst them, so that, as a rule, the woman has from two to four husbands." "Notes on Ladak in 1867," by Assistant-Surgeon Henry Cayley, *Indian Medical Gazette*, Nov. 1, 1867, p. 266.

\* "Tottiyar.—Among this tribe brothers, uncles, nephews, and other kindred, hold their wives in common."—Abbé Dubois, *Description of the Character, Manners, and Customs of the People of India*, p. 3.

† In the Tinnevely district, a similar practice exists among the Reddies. A young woman, of sixteen or twenty years of age, is frequently married to a boy of five or six years, or even of a tenderer age. After marriage she, the wife, lives with some other man, a near relative on the maternal side, frequently an uncle, and sometimes with her boy-husband's own father. The progeny, so begotten, are affiliated on the boy-husband. When the

The system of polyandry in existence in Travancore, Malabar, and Canara, is known by the term *Marumakattayam*, or nepotism in the female line, and is alleged to have originated with Pursooramen (the first king of Malabar), who, on introducing Brahmins into the district, and to prevent the dispersion of their property, permitted only the elder brothers to marry, and their sons were to be considered as family property; and from the younger brothers being celibates, they were allowed to cohabit with females of a lower caste, and their progeny (not being Brahmins) could not inherit the possessions of their fathers. From this arose the promiscuous intercourse in the lower classes among themselves. The females, prior to maturity, passed through a form of marriage, the bridegroom not claiming the position and right of a husband: these girls on attaining maturity are permitted to consort and cohabit with as many as they please, provided that the individuals are members of their own caste, or some other superior to themselves.

The origin, therefore, of this unique social custom is not difficult to trace. The particular phase or form under which it exists among them, perhaps, has some connection with their original practice of female infanticide, which, causing a scarcity of females in the tribe, led to the adoption of this particular system of marriage as a matter of convenience. Or a reverse relation of cause and effect between these two may have existed; polyandry, perhaps, pre-existed, and, as a sequence, the female sex became one too many in number, and to keep down the needless disproportion, female infanticide arose. But, be this as it may, the existing scarcity of female offspring among the Todawar tribe cannot be attributed to infanticidal murder, which iniquitous practice has long since been abandoned, and, unless their system of promiscuous cohabitation has some occult physiological effect in determining a preponderance of male over female offspring, this disproportion, I conceive, is difficult to explain otherwise.

Looking again at their *funeral rites* and method of disposing of their dead, great analogy is found to exist. As among the Todawars, so among the Hindoos of the plains, cremation or the custom of burning the corpse is practised; so are also the customs of keeping the dead body laid out in state, fantastically dressed and ornamented for several days (in the plains the climate does not admit of the body lying in state for any

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boy comes of age, he finds his wife an old woman, and perhaps past child-bearing. So he, in his turn, contracts a *liaison* with some other boy's wife, and procreates children for him.

time), and then conveying it to the cremation ground, followed by an animated procession of mourners chanting lamentations relative to the good qualities of the deceased; and the practice of throwing coloured grain at the corpse previous to burning it, as well as of collecting and preserving the ashes and other relics after the body has been burnt, is also very commonly observed.\*

The annual funeral ceremony of the Todawars, again, may be regarded as the prototype of the "*Thavashum*," or funeral feast, otherwise termed "*Gothanum*" (which the Todas call *Kaidoo*), or the giving of cows to Brahmins, by the natives of the low country, characterised by the same singular combination of hilarity and grief, bloody sacrifices, and feasting on the part of the friends and relatives who assemble on the occasion, as among the Todas at their funeral ceremony, with this difference, perhaps, that the buffalo is not the only animal sacrificed; goats, sheep, and fowls also being offered up equally as often.† Whilst some tribes offer bloody sacrifices, others again simply offer rice-balls and water to the manes of the deceased, for the purpose of supplying the supposed wants of his soul.‡

In religion and devotional practices, again, the resemblance between the Hill tribes and the Hindoos of the plains is still more close and striking, consecrating every hill, dale, stream, and wood.§

Like the Hill tribes, it is well known that the Hindoos also have their "*gooroos*," or priests, who, to fit them for their offices, have to undergo certain preparatory ceremonies, somewhat identical with those described for the *Palal* and *Poojary* of the Todawars. In the retired contemplation of recluses, the self-denying vow places these men beyond the common wants of humanity, rendering them indifferent to the vicissitudes of climate, and to the effects of cold, heat, hunger, thirst, and

\* The Thotigars bury their dead. After some little time, they either get a little sand from the grave, or place a few of the bones of the deceased in a pot, and bury them at a certain place, and put up a stone. These stones, of which some fifty or sixty are sometimes seen at a place, are worshipped on certain days annually.

† Among bloody sacrifices, buffaloes stand next to human beings.

‡ To procure relief for the wandering spirit after death, they make to it offerings of rice, etc., in a religious ceremony almost universally attended to, called the *shraddhu*, and on which, frequently, a rich man expends not less than 300,000 to 400,000 rupees. *Vide* p. 50, *A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos*, by the Rev. W. Ward, 5th edit., 1863.

§ Hindoo mythology consecrates every hill and dale, every fountain and river, every wood and plain.—*The Virgin Widow*, by a Christian Missionary, preface, p. 1.

nakedness.\* They have also their class of monks and devotees, recognised under a variety of names according to the peculiar tenets of the sect to which they are attached.† These several sacred characters, it is also well known, delight in the same sort of retired life and in similar practices of self-abnegation, and are regarded by the masses with an almost equal degree of respect and awe as is the *Palal* among the Todawar tribe.‡ Then again, the Hindoos have also their sacred herds of cattle, which are attached to their places and temples of worship, the products of which are reserved exclusively for the use of the *Gooroo* and other sacred functionaries officiating in such places.§ Each sacred herd also has its *Karah-pussoo* (a cow whose udder is black, and which is held in great esteem by the Hindoos) or queen cow, which is looked upon as a sacred object by the people, and is known from the rest by a bell attached to its neck, and by its black points and other marks of beauty. The milk from this cow is so much revered, that the common people will not even touch it, much less buy or make use of it for any base purpose. These animals are generally mottled white and black, the udder being black. When an animal of this colour is calved, the natives do not keep it, but give it away to Brahmins, either when young or after it has grown up. The animal itself is also privileged and petted by all, and allowed to roam and browse wherever its fancy listeth without molestation. Every morning, before the temple doors are opened, this sacred cow is led forth by the Hindoo priest, with the bell suspended to its neck, to the front of the sacred portals, and no mortal dare peep into the *sanctum sanctorum* of the temple before this highly revered animal has first viewed the deity and interior of the temple, after which the doors are thrown wide open, and the usual matutinal services are commenced.

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\* Indeed, retirement from the world and abstraction of mind, assisted by bodily austerities, is considered as the direct way to final beatitude.—*A View of the History, etc.*, by the Rev. W. Ward, 5th edit., 1863, p. 52.

“But the most startling form of their religious — is found in the retired contemplation of recluses. The rigid, self-denying vow of the Yogi is intense and all excluding. It places him above the requisitions of society; it severs his connexion with a common humanity, and it renders him indifferent to cold and heat, to hunger and nakedness.”—*The Virgin Widow*, by a Christian Missionary, preface, p. vi.

† They (the Gooroos) generally reside in a kind of monasteries, or insulated hermitages, generally called *matam*, and show themselves but seldom in public. Abbé Dubois, *Description of the Character, Manners, and Customs of the People of India*, p. 54.

‡ *Yogi* is but another name for *Pal*, *aul*.

§ The cow, as a form of *Bhuguvutie*, is an object of worship, and receives the homage of Hindoos at an annual festival.—*A View of the History, Literature, and Religion of the Hindoos*, by the Rev. W. Ward, 5th edit., 1853, p. 29.

But apart from this sacred character, the cow, of all domesticated animals,\* has ever held a foremost position in the esteem and favour of the Hindoo classes. Each household or family has its favourite cow, which is looked upon almost as a member of the family, and is as much cared for and cherished as one of their own children.† The death of one of these animals produces in a Hindoo family an equal degree of sensation and grief as that of any human member of it. The milk is regarded as a sacred product, and even the very excrement and urine of the animal are invested with various astrological attributes and prophylactic virtues in the uncultivated mind of the Hindoo.‡

The class of shepherds or milkmen again, amongst the Hindoos, though by caste holding a very inferior position, is highly favoured by virtue of the functions they exercise in milking the cow. Even the sanctified gooroo, or the most sensitive Brahmin, will partake of the milk or butter which may have been ever so freely handled by the filthiest of this class.

According to Hindoo history, *Krishna*, one of their principal deified incarnations, was once a cowherd, and hence this class came in part by its highly privileged character.

Thus, it may be readily understood, how the buffalo§ with its bell|| (in the absence of a better species of kine suited to the trying climate of the Hills) came to be deified, and to play such an important part in the religion of the Neilgherry Todawars.

The kine met with on the plains is a poor stunted breed, compared with which the Hill buffalo is a noble animal.

Many of the races on the plains also adore the sun, and believe equally in the doctrine of transmigration of souls, as do the Todawars. In fine, in the religion of the Todawars, we have presented to our view a true skeleton picture of religion as it anciently existed, and before it became adulterated with idol worship, caste artifice, and other devices of priest-craft, which had no existence until the era when the Brahminical order became the ascendant class in Southern India.

\* Among other animals, the buffalo is worshipped. *Vide* sect. v, under the head "other animals worshipped," p. 157, Ward's *History, etc., of the Hindoos*.

† "In worshipping the cow no image is used, but worship is performed before a jar of water." The Todas substitute milk for water.

‡ The very dung of the cow is eaten as an atonement for sin, and, with its urine, is used in worship.—*Note*, p. 29, Ward, *A View of the History, etc., of the Hindoos*, 5th edit., 1863.

§ Yama had a buffalo for his vehicle, and is the *Shraddhu devu*, or regent of funeral rites.—Ward, p. 21, *idem*.

|| The bell, represented in the hands of Guneshu, is the pattern of a temple.—Ward, *idem*.



## PART III.—CAIRNS AND CROMLECHS.

This account of the Hill tribes of the Blue Mountains may not be considered complete without allusion to these ancient remains, which have been somewhat connected with one or other of these tribes, and, under the circumstances, it would be necessary that a cursory glance should be taken of them.

To show that these cairns or cromlechs are not confined to these Hills, but are scattered all over the hills and plains of Southern India, is not difficult. Two miles west of the lake of the Red Hills several cairns exist, of which a description is briefly given in the form of a memorandum in the *Madras Literary Society's Journal*, No. 21, October to December, 1838, p. 346. The cairn is said to form a parallelogram within a circle of various dimensions (the squares and circles); squares 6 feet long and  $2\frac{1}{2}$  to 4 wide, diameter of the circle 18 feet; and underneath a granite slab is found an earthen vessel filled with human bones; and pieces of broken pottery are said to lie about those that have been opened, and the writer believes that in all probability they were introduced prior to the introduction of Hindooism.

The Rev. J. S. Kearns, Missionary of the Society for Propagation of the Gospel, Madras, describes some of these cairns in the *Madras Literary Society's Journal*—No. IX, New Series, Volume V. (Old Series XXI, No. 48, p. 27, 1859)—as found at Courtallum, a village in the Tenkasi Taluq of the Zillah of Tinnevely. Mr. Kearns gives drawings of urns, pottery, spear-heads, hog spears, sword pieces, etc., as found in them. Some of the urns are said to measure four feet in height and about three in greatest diameter, without ornament, the mouths only being moulded into bead work. Some are without them; others are described as of coarse manufacture, but strong and durable. Mr. Kearns believes that these are quite different from those discovered in Ireland, and with which he is acquainted. Some small earthen vessels of exquisite manufacture were also found in these cairns, and Mr. Kearns states that the pottery of the small vessels is exactly similar to those seen in the cairns of the Annamalays and Neilgherries. At the bottom of the cairns iron weapons were discovered, but mostly reduced to an oxide.

In the *Madras Literary Society's Journal*, No. 32, January to June, 1847, p. 77, Captain Congreve gives an able and interesting account of the Neilgherry cairns, and in this elaborate article endeavours to make out, or rather connect these cairns, etc., with the Todas, and thus unite them with Celtic Scythians, but which, from all I can see and learn, cannot stand good,

and although Captain Congreve's arguments are specious and learned, yet they do not prove the object.

In the same Journal, vol. xvi, parts i and ii, 1847, p. 78, the Rev. W. Taylor alludes to Captain Congreve's article, and publishes a couple of translations from the vernacular, giving an account of these cairns, with remarks by himself. Mr. Taylor speaks of having met with a gentleman who told him of the tombs and grotto houses found at Chittoor, which, on being opened, were found to contain pots or jars, and that the receptacles that contained them were termed *Panja Pandaval*, and that the contents of these vessels were examined by a medical officer, who declared that the bones were not human.

The kitchen utensils found in these cairns are those still in use among the natives of Southern India, but the natives know nothing of these cairns. The Rev. Mr. Taylor states that they are termed *Panta Curzi*, *Puddu Curzi*, *Kurumba Curzi*, etc., and the Native wrote that *he* had seen them in several places of what is now termed the Madras district. They are also met with, *I* know for a fact, in most districts of Southern India. Mr. Taylor explains the different names given to them by natives. I find that they are invariably termed *Panta* or *Kurumba*, *Curzi*. Both these terms are the most popular not only with the learned but the ignorant, and are generally connected with the rule of the Pandavas; they are more or less alike wherever met with, differing in size and form in the same locality as well as in the several districts. This probably is in accordance with the different degrees of rank enjoyed by the people who erected them. From my own personal experience, and the several excavations I have made, on general principles the contents were all more or less alike: in some places the urns, jars, pots, etc., are more or less ornamented, and in others plain. These patterns I find are of three different kinds: some are of red or black clay; the smaller vessels are nicely made and finely glazed, the larger pots and jars are somewhat coarse, and the more large pots and trough-like vessels are coarser still in make. Captain Harkness, in his *Description of a Singular Aboriginal Race Inhabiting the Neilgherry Hills*, 1832, gives an account of the cairns, with a drawing of urns and animals found in them—*vide* pp. 33 to 36. Captain J. Ouchterlony believes that these cairns belonged to some peculiar race who in former times inhabited these Hills, and that they afford no clue to the history of the Todas; and the assumption that the Todas are the descendants of Scythians, and the cairns the work of their ancestors, is erroneous—*vide* his "Geographical and Statistical Memoir of a Survey of the Neilgherries, 1847," published in the *Madras Literary Society's Journal*, January to December, 1848, pp. 79 and 80.

The ornamentation consists of bead work in relief, sometimes forming zig-zag raised edges. Among the excavations I made in the Madras district, I found large and small vessels of various kinds: hatchet iron without handles, spear heads, iron tubes, like the cut off ends of a gun-barrel, used probably as blow pipes, and long iron pins, etc. From these facts it appears to me that the cairns and cromlechs found on the Neilgherries have the same origin as those interspersed on the plains and other hill plateaus of this Peninsula, and are most probably of the same age. As regards the ornamentation and other slight differences, they may be accounted for by local peculiarities. In proof of this, I can cite similar instances in connection with what is known as the *Cunnyah Covil*, which consists in some Neem, Peipul, or Banean tree being selected and dedicated to a virgin goddess—frequently a large white ant burrow exists here, and it may even form the residence of a cobra. To the presiding deity, offerings of men, horses and cattle, etc., are made in terra cotta, or baked clay, after the usual manner of pottery, and are placed under the shade of the tree by childless women in fulfilment of vows made. These offerings are supposed to propitiate the goddess who takes up her residence on the tree, to enable her to open the barren womb, and confer the blessings of maternity. In some places heaps and heaps of earthen images, which have accumulated for ages, may be seen; but the finish and ornamentation of these different statues vary, not only in the same but in different places, according to the age of the vessels and qualifications of the potters who formed them. In the south, similar offerings are frequently made to some of the numerous *Savmy* houses met with in those parts.

That the several cairns, cromlechs, etc., contain vases, urns, and various kinds of domestic utensils and glazed pottery of various forms, is certain, differing only slightly in make and shape, and it would appear that some of these contain ashes of what are believed to be cremated bodies, from the specimens of animal bones and charcoal found in them.

Dr. Caldwell, in his *Comparative Dravidian Grammar*, p. 526, states that similar remains are met with in Circassia and Russia; and circles of stones surrounding ancient graves are found both on the Southern Arabian Coast and in the Somali country in Africa.

The Todas themselves attribute the cairns found on the Neilgherries sometimes to a people who preceded them, at others to the Kurumbas, and that they formed their burial places. We now know that these cairns are met with, not only in our own, but in the sister presidencies also—in fact throughout the Peninsula of India.

On the Neilgherries there are still a few cairns that have not been opened ; a few of these may be seen about three miles out on the Makoortee road, on the crest of the Hills, called by the Todas "*Caave* and *Curreen*." Large numbers of cairns and cromlechs, which have been untouched, are met with in the Madras, Chittoor, and Salem districts. It is generally believed by the natives that these cairns and cromlechs are the work of the followers of the Pandean king, and that these at one time ruled on the Neilgherries also. The Todas and Badagas likewise believe this, while some of them attribute them to the Kurumbas. The Rev. Mr. Metz is also of the latter opinion, and I am inclined to coincide with this gentleman. We know that the Kurumbas were interspersed all over Southern India, and were driven from thence probably by their conquerors to the jungles and hills they at present occupy, and it seems likely to have been their work, executed possibly during the Pandean dynasty, a succession of kings ; this is also the popular belief among the natives generally. The objection brought against this view by some writers is that the Kurumbas, as a race, are of a dwarfish stature, and physically weak and feeble, and that they could not have been able to move the large masses of stone which form the cromlechs. To this I would answer—look at most of the Hindoo temples and Muntapums, where large masses of stone and huge monolithic pillars are to be seen ; how were these moved to great distances and made to occupy the positions we find them in at present ? The natives were not generally conversant with skilled mechanical appliances, such as cranks, pulleys, etc. ; yet how frequently do we witness, even in the present day, in remote parts, the ease with which they move and raise to lofty positions huge masses of stones by simple means. This is effected, for the greater part it is true, at the expense of much human labour ; but from the fact of labour being always plentiful and cheap in India, it is not looked upon in the same light as with us. We know, also, how, during native rule, human labour was impressed to execute gigantic works ; and with these facts before us, we need not despise the dwarfish stature and feeble physique of Kurumbas, for their deficiency in size and strength is made up in numbers, when they must have formed large communities.

I have observed in the south, among the Maravar people, that they frequently erect in front of their dwellings square sheds, open on all sides on a raised floor, and under this a large flat stone placed on supports raised two or three feet from the ground. On this stone all their chief domestic and religious ceremonies are conducted. A good example of this may be seen in the palace of Shevagungah, where it is termed

*Kurrunkul chowkay*, and I have seen similar erections at other houses in and about Shevagungah and elsewhere. To me these shrines appear to have some occult connection with the cromlechs, and to be in a measure figurative of them. These are erected in individual houses, and should not be confounded with what may be frequently seen in the Cuddapah, Kurnool, Bellary, and other districts, where large slabs of gneiss or blue limestone are placed in the villages under some shady trees, and on which, during their leisure moments, the men squat themselves to discuss the gup of the day or the more important affairs of their agricultural operations. These places also form the head-quarters of the village punchayets during their sittings.

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#### PART IV.—KURUMBAS.

*Kurumbas*.—From *Kurumboo* mischief, the characteristic of a class of savages who are supposed to be the aborigines of Southern India, from which the term Kurumba is derived.

A tribe who call themselves, and are recognised as, Kurumbas, having three sub-divisions among them, namely—

1. Mullu Kurumba.    2. Naya Kurumba.
3. Panias Kurumba.

These three are alike in caste, social and domestic habits, etc., but chiefly derive their appellation from the localities in which they reside. As a body, they confine their habitations to the middle belts of hills or intermediate slopes.

The *Mullu Kurumbas* chiefly occupy the middle belts of these hills, while the other two divisions are confined to the lower slopes, or are inhabitants of the Wynaad jungles; but the tribe generally is recognised as mountaineers. Portions of the same tribe are scattered over many parts of Southern India, more especially to the south; and as a body are somewhat erratic and restless, migrating from place to place, selecting generally some forest or jungle, either on the summit, slope, or base of some hilly tract, for their temporary abode.

*Physical appearance*.—The Kurumba tribe are small in stature, and have a squalid and somewhat uncouth appearance from their peculiar physiognomy, wild matted hair, and almost nude bodies. An average of twenty-five Kurumbas gives the following measurements, etc.:—

Age, 30·20 years; height, 60·64 inches; circumference of head, 20·24—short from end to end, with a lofty crown or dome, and a prominent forehead; neck, 11·04 inches; chest, 30·15; arms, 8·77; thighs, 15·27; length of arms, 29·50; length of hand, 6·75; breadth of hands, 3·18; length of legs, 35; length of feet, 9·75; breadth of feet, 3·25 inches; and in

weight (avoirdupois), 100·44 pounds. They have a shortish and spare form of body, with a peculiar wedge-shaped face and obtuse facial angle; cheeks hollow, with prominent molars or cheek bones; slightly pointed chin; eyes moderately large, and frequently blood-shot; colour of irides dark brown (No. 1 of Paul Broca's Tables); the nose has a deep indentation at the root about  $1\frac{3}{4}$  inch in depth, which is general, and when contrasted with the profile, or line with the ridge of the nose and *os frontis*, it gives them a very peculiar expression of feature. Distance of growth of hair from root of nose to scalp,  $2\frac{1}{4}$  inches; length of nose,  $1\frac{3}{4}$ , alæ widened; nostrils exposed; breadth of nostrils, 1 inch and 5 lines, ridge slightly depressed. The hair is long and black, and is grown matted and straggling, somewhat wavy, and is sometimes tied into a knot, with a piece of cord on the crown or back of the head, while the ends are allowed to be free and floating. They have scarcely any moustache or whiskers, and a straggling scanty beard; occasionally one is met with who has a full moustache, whiskers, and beard. They are, as a body, sickly-looking, pot-bellied, large mouthed, prognathous, with prominent out-standing teeth and thick lips—frequently saliva dribbles away from their mouths. They are recognised by the Toda tribe as mountaineers, and are called by them "*Curbs*," and from them they exact certain services. The men show great agility in climbing and descending hills, trees, etc.

The women have much the same features as the men, only somewhat softened in expression, and slightly modified in feature, with a small pug nose, and surly aspect. Their general appearance is anything but prepossessing. Hair tied at the back, carelessly divided in the centre, and the sides scraggy. Some of them are of small stature and coarse build; others smaller, and of delicate make. An average of twelve gives the following measurements. I regret that I was unable to complete the usual number of twenty-five:—

Age, 17 years; height, 54·25 inches; circumference of head, 19; neck, 9·75; chest, 26·25; arms, 7·75; thighs, 11·50; length of arms, 24·50; length of hand, 6·75; breadth of hand, 2·38; length of legs, 33·10; length of feet, 8·25; breadth of feet, 23·15 inches; weight (avoirdupois), 68 pounds.

They are very shy of strangers, seeking shelter to hide themselves from view; very morose when spoken to, and seldom replying to questions put.

*Dress.*—The men have scarcely any clothing beyond their *lungooty*, though some few, well-to-do, are met with dressed like other natives. The women have merely a piece of cloth round the chest, extending from under the arms to the knee;

others have only a waist cloth, having their breasts and other parts of the body exposed and naked. Some few, who can afford it, have better clothing, and cover their breasts. The cloth is tied with a cord or strip of bark under the armpits, and a second cord encircles the waist and keeps the cloth bound, producing an ungraceful and stiff appearance.

*Ornaments.*—Both men and women are fond of these, and wear a few rude ones made of iron, brass, various seeds, shells, and glass beads, as earrings, necklettes, armlets, bracelets, rings, etc. Sometimes these are made of plaited straw, giving to them, when worn, a very singular, but not unpicturesque, appearance. Some of the women have tattoo marks about their arms and shoulders.

*Villages and Huts.*—Their villages are termed "*Motta*," and are generally located at an elevation of 2,000 or 3,000 feet in mountain clefts, glens, or forest sheltered localities, comprising one long apartment, extending from 30 to 50 feet in length, scarcely 5 feet high, loosely and scantily covered with thatch, grass, leaves and branches of trees, walled round by brushwood or bamboo plaitings, and divided by the same into several apartments, each not exceeding 8 or 10 feet square. There is neither door nor door frame, but the huts are shut at night by placing plaitings of bamboo or brushwood against the opening. Their dwellings are usually surrounded by small patches of cultivation indifferently and carelessly cultivated, without the use of manure of any kind.

*Household Furniture.*—They have no furniture; their utensils comprise one or two chatties, vessels of bamboo, and bottle gourd, shells, etc. At one time it is believed that they did not possess even a cooking vessel: flat stones were heated, and on them their grain was parched. Some have animal skins, others bamboo plaitings, to sleep on, and some sleep on the bare ground without anything. The whole family huddle themselves together into a single hut, and frequently have not sufficient room to stretch themselves at full length.

*Language.*—Their speech is a corruption of Canarese and Tamil, and among themselves they give a peculiar twang to their words, that without some practice and familiarity with them they cannot be easily understood. They have no written language or tradition of any kind, and know nothing of their ancestors.

*Cultivation.*—The various dry grains, chillies, indian corn, yams, and some of the commonest vegetables, are grown by them in extremely small quantities, but, as a rule, they do not cultivate. Frequently, a piece of jungle is rudely cleared, the soil roughly broken up, and such seeds as they can obtain from

the villages in the vicinity (plains) are scattered on it; sometimes patches of land at a distance from their abodes are cultivated in like manner. They also have the plantain, mango, jack, and other fruit trees, which in a manner grow wild in the vicinity. When their cultivation is at some distance, the family remove thither during harvest time, inviting their friends to join, and reaping only so much as is requisite for their immediate wants. The grain so reaped is broken between stones into rough meal, and boiled into porridge or baked into cakes. They never store the produce of their harvest, or preserve any for future occasions; but eat while they can procure it, living in idleness and making merry while the supply lasts. Sometimes the community unites, and live on the produce of a single family, moving in succession from one patch of cultivation to another; and when the whole of the cultivated plots are exhausted, there is no other resource left them but to fall back on the produce of their fruit trees in the neighbourhood, such as the jack and plantain, with other wild fruits; or the community scatters, each family taking a different direction towards the jungles, in search of honey, edible roots, and fruits. They are fond of the chase, and are expert in waylaying and destroying animals, either by nooses, nets, or rude constructions of stone gins. Thus they frequently live on the flesh of the *sambre*, spotted deer, squirrel, wild cat, rats, snakes, etc. Sometimes they engage themselves as labourers, and are very expert in felling jungles and forests, cutting wood, squaring timber, etc., but do not take kindly to other kinds of manual labour. Frequently, they are so hardly pressed from want, that the men take to the jungles, and the women to the villages in the vicinity, where they crave for and receive the refuse rice, rice-water, etc., and will sometimes do a little work in cleaning, winnowing, or grinding grain, for which they receive wages from the women of the different villages, in the shape of small quantities of cooked food or grain.

*Ceremonies.*—They have no marriage ceremony, but are guided by fancy, and after some time of cohabitation they take it into their heads to get up a feast, when they promise before friends to live together as man and wife; but some of them, who are sufficiently enlightened by frequenting neighbouring villages, carry out some trifling ceremonies in their attempts to ape the Hindoos, when they feast their friends according to their means, followed by a general bathing and dressing with new cloths, and dancing together, promiscuously on such occasions.

*Ceremonial offices.*—Those Kurumbas who live on the hills officiate as priests to the Badagas, another tribe which forms



the chief population of these hills. The Badaga will do nothing without the presence of a Kurumba, so that each district has its own Kurumba priest. No cultivation can be carried out without the presence of one or more Kurumbas. The Kurumbas, after some unmeaning ceremonies, must start the first plough, sow the first handful of seed, and gather the first sheaves, before it is followed up by the Badagas. Sometimes, on such occasions, they sacrifice a sheep, goat, or other animal, of which the Kurumba appropriates a portion for himself. Should the field become blighted, their cattle attacked with murrain, or themselves sick, the Kurumba is called in at once, and requested to use his enchantments to free them of those evils, and to propitiate the offended deity. On these occasions he frequently goes among the cattle, or in the fields, on all fours, lowing like a calf, to propitiate the deity, and frighten away the blight, murrain, etc. He is supposed to be well versed in the use of herbs, and prescribes for all their ailments; implicit confidence is placed in his skill, and he is remunerated either in money or grain, and sometimes both. The Kurumbas also officiate as priests at their marriages and deaths. The customary fee paid by the Badagas to the Kurumbas is four annas for every yoke of cattle or plough they keep. The produce of the first sheaves reaped by the Kurumbas is immediately threshed, made into meal, baked into cakes, and offered to Ceres, as the first-fruits of the land. The Kurumbas, as a body, keep the other tribes in great dread of witchcraft, not even excepting the Todas, who look upon the Kurumbas as great adepts in the power and skill of bewitching or destroying men, animals, or other property. The natives of the plains also fear them for their black arts: a Badaga will not meet a Kurumba alone, he will flee from him as from a wild beast, and is ready to die of terror. The Kurumbas are also employed as musicians by the Toda and Badaga tribes on all ceremonial and festive occasions; they play on the flute and tom-tom very dexterously to the admiration of the Todas and Badagas. On all festive occasions, the Kurumbas, as well as the other tribes (Kotars and Irulas), are invited and receive their share of the sacrificial offerings. Ceres, the goddess of corn, is nominally said to be their household god. The Todas are respected more than any of the other tribes. Their dead are either buried or burnt as may be found convenient at the time. They withstand the endemic diseases of the locality pretty well, and are not subject to fever. It is said of the other tribes that if they happen to sleep for a night in the localities occupied by the Kurumbas, they are sure to contract and die of a virulent kind of fever,—so deadly are the places inhabited by this tribe.

*Deities.*—They hold some crude notions of a superior being, whom they designate under a variety of names, with no distinct idea as to who or what he is. They sometimes offer sacrifices of fowls, sheep, goats, with fruits and flowers, to any stone, tree, or anthill; or they pay adoration, under divers appellations, to any particular locality which they may take a fancy to.

*Superstitions.*—The Kurumbas are superstitious; and while they keep all the other tribes on these hills in awe, they themselves fear the Todas, believing that they possess supernatural powers over them. They are fanciful in their ideas, and would at times worship anything they meet with as a deity. They are said to hold in respect, and make offerings at, the different cairns and cromlechs met with on these hills, and from which it is believed that these cairns and cromlechs are the work of their ancestors. Against this, their weak and dwarfed stature is brought forward as an objection, as most of these cairns and cromlechs are built of huge stones, such as is believed the Kurumba tribe could not move in the absence of suitable appliances. Again, the Todas, who are the first occupants of these hills, and whom the Kurumbas followed, know nothing of these cairns and cromlechs, and it is not possible they would have been ignorant of the work of the Kurumbas if they were the originators of these singular depositories of the dead. At present, the subject is involved in mystery.

*Diseases.*—They are subject to fever, smallpox, ophthalmia, rheumatism, and dropsy as a rule. They do not adopt any treatment; but, at the instigation of the old women, they frequently resort to various herbs, roots, etc., with which they practise on others.

*Products of the Jungles.*—They obtain from the jungles several kinds of grain, fruits, medicinal herbs, roots, honey, and beeswax, which they barter to the low country people for grain and cloths.

*REMARKS.*—The Kurumbas, or Curbs, are believed by some to have been a class of nomadic shepherds of the plains at one time, who were the earliest known inhabitants of the *Dravidadesam*, or country now embraced in the Carnatic or Coromandel. They at one time established petty principalities in the greater part of this peninsula, but were ultimately absorbed into the Chola kingdom, and their remnants became scattered into small communities, and are now found occupying hill tracts, glens, rock-clefts, jungles, etc., having lost all their flocks and herds, and deriving at the present day a precarious living from the jungles, and seldom practising agriculture. Numerous sites are still met with and recognised as “Kurumba Kotes” by the

natives generally; and it is possible that the subjects of this paper, the Kurumbas of the Neilgherries, are the descendants of some one of the communities that became scattered, and previously known as the nomadic shepherds of the plains, who overspread a considerable portion of the Tamil country; and their progeny are now met with, not only on the Neilgherries, but in many of the wilder parts of Southern India, in small communities.

Whilst the appearance of this tribe is so uncouth and forbidding in their own forest glens, they are open to wonderful improvement by regular work, exercise, and food: of this ample evidence is to be seen at the Government Chinchona Plantations at Neddiwuttum, where a gang of Kurumbas, comprising some twenty individuals, are employed as labourers, receiving their wages in grain for the most part. They appear to give satisfaction to their employers; and in their general appearance they cannot be recognised from other natives, except perhaps by that peculiar physiognomy characteristic of the tribe, and their somewhat slight conformation and dwarfed stature. They have not the pot-belly, do not gape, nor is the dribbling saliva or bloodshot eyes, common to their brethren of the jungles, to be found among them. The headman of the gang called himself a maistry, and had four wives,—two were dead and two alive; he was the father of ten children, of whom one died, and nine were alive. Each individual takes as many wives as he can keep,—one is the chief, the others are looked upon as concubines. They are subject to the headman of the tribe, without whose consent they will do nothing, and to whom all their disputes are referred for arbitration.

Since these pages were written, I have met with a few Kurumbas scattered over some of the coffee estates in the vicinity of Kotagherry and Goodaloor, where they were employed as coolies in weeding and pruning the coffee-trees. Regular work, proper food, and exercise, have very considerably improved the habits and appearance of this people.

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
#### PART V.—KOTARS.

This tribe ranks next to the Todas in priority of occupation of these hills. They have no caste, and are in this respect equal to the Pariahs of the low country; and, as a body, are the most industrious of the hill tribes, giving much of their time and attention to agriculture and handicraft, etc. When not required on agricultural operations, they employ themselves as carpenters, smiths, basket-makers, etc., making and repair-

ing their ploughs, bill-hooks, mamoties, etc. They also employ themselves as curriers, and are highly esteemed in the plains for the excellent leather they cure. They perform all the menial offices required by the Todas and Badagas, supplying them with barbers, washermen, etc. They acknowledge the Todas as lords of the soil, and accordingly pay the tribute demanded by them as "goodoo". At the same time they exact from each hamlet of the Badagas, within a certain distance of their own village, certain annual fees, which they receive in kind, for services rendered as handicraftsmen, etc., in addition to that of ceremonial or festive occasions for menial services performed. As cultivators of the soil, they only produce as much as will satisfy their own requirements, and any surplus they may obtain is bartered for iron and other produce of the plains. In confirmation of their having followed the Todas as settlers on these hills, they hold the best lands, and have the privilege of selecting the best whenever they wish to extend their holdings.

*Physical Appearance.*—They are well made, and of tolerable height, rather good featured and light skinned, having a copper colour, and some of them are the fairest skinned among the hill tribes. They have well-formed heads, covered with long black hair, grown long and let loose, or tied up carelessly at the back of the head. An average of twenty-five men gives the following measurements, etc.:—age, 27·68 years; height, 62·61 inches; circumference of head, 20·95; neck, 11·95; chest, 30·68; arms, 8·76; thighs, 15·52; length of arms, 30; hands, 7; breadth of hands, 3·25; length of feet, 10; breadth of feet, 3·50 inches; weight (avoirdupois), 105·20 lbs. They have a slightly elongated face with sharply defined features; the forehead narrow but prominent, and occasionally protuberant; ears flat, and lying close to the skull. The growth of hair from the verge of scalp to eyebrows,  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches distant; eyes dark brown, of moderate size and deep set, varying in colour from Nos. 1 to 5, in Paul Broca's tables; eyebrows dark and bushy, with a tendency to approach, frequently united to each other; nose, as a rule, smaller and more sharply defined than in the Todas, ridged and slightly rounded, and pointed at the extremity, two inches in length; alæ of nostrils expanded, measuring  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch in breadth; mouth of moderate size and well formed; teeth well grown and regular; lips of fair size and well compressed; chin well set and small. Altogether they may be pronounced tolerably good looking, and the general aspect of the countenance indicating energy and decision.

The women are of moderate height, of fair build of body, and not nearly so good looking as the men. An average of twenty-

five women gives the following results:—age 32·44 years; circumference of head, 20·36; height, 57·98; circumference of neck, 10·70; chest, 29·30; arms, 8·20; thighs, 14·63; length of arms, 26·52; length of hands, 6·50; breadth of hands, 3; length of legs, 35; length of feet, 9·25; breadth of feet, 2·25 inches; weight (avoirdupois) 96·24 lbs. Most of them have prominent foreheads, with more of a snub-nose, and a somewhat vacant expression about their features. They are rather timid when approached, frequently running into their huts and shutting themselves up. They seem to enjoy robust health, and have large families. Their arms are tattooed, having nine streaks, with four dots on each arm, thus , and four circular marks on each forearm, thus . The women assist the men at their work in the fields, and make baskets, chatties, and pots, etc.

*Villages.*—There are some seven villages altogether: six of these are located on these hills, and the seventh is at Goodaloor. They form large communities, each village containing from thirty to sixty or more huts, of tolerable size, built of mud walls, and covered with the usual thatch-grass, somewhat after the style of native huts in the plains; but the arrangement of the dwellings is far from being neat or prepossessing in some villages. The floors are well raised from two to three feet above the soil, with eaves or a short verandah in front, and a pial, or seat, on either side of the door, under the eaves, on which the people squat themselves when idle. The size of the doors, giving entrance to their huts, measures 46×26 inches.

The station of Kotagherry takes its name from the Kotar villages in its vicinity. The Kotars, as a body, are a dirty set, with most foul habits. All the dead cattle and carrion in the vicinity, of every kind, find acceptance amongst them as food, and is devoured by them. The whole Kotar population of the seven villages is supposed to count a little above one thousand souls.

*Religion.*—The Kotar religion is idolatrous to some extent: some rude image of wood or stone, a rock or tree in a secluded locality, frequently form their objects of worship, to which sacrificial offerings are made; but the recognised place of worship at each village consists of a large square piece of ground, walled round with loose stones, three feet high, and containing in its centre two pent-shaped sheds of thatch, open before and behind, and on the posts that support them some rude circles, and other figures, are drawn. No image of any sort is visible here; and these buildings, which are a little apart, are supposed to be dedicated to Shiva and his wife. They have crude and indistinct ideas of these deities. They hold an annual feast in

honour of their gods, which comprises a continuous course of debauchery and licentiousness, extending over two or three days. On these occasions they clothe and ornament themselves in their best, and make as grand a show as they can, to witness which the other tribes are invited. Perhaps this is the only occasion, if at all, that they have recourse to water for the purposes of ablution. Much indecent dancing takes place on these occasions between the men and women, and more frequently the spirit of their deity is supposed to descend on some of them, when their frantic deeds are sickening to behold, and seem to form but a branch of demonology.

*Ceremonies.*—The Kotar marriage is a simple rite, and is much in conformity with that of the low caste or Pariah of the plains. As a rule, they marry and live with one wife, and have a number of children.

*Cattle.*—The Kotars possess a small breed of cows, but have no buffaloes. It is believed that the Todas will object to their having buffaloes on account of their uncleanly habits; consequently, they make no effort to procure them. They never, as a rule, milk their cattle, but leave it all to the calves.

*Annual Feast.*—The Kotars keep up an annual feast in memory of their dead, when a few cattle are slain on a rude kind of altar constructed for the purpose, and on it a portion of the flesh of the animal is laid, with a little of each of the different kinds of grain they cultivate, and is consumed as a burnt offering to their gods, in memory of their dead relatives and friends. During this ceremony, the young men and maidens dance around the altar promiscuously. Whilst the younger members are thus engaged, the elders busy themselves in preparing a grand repast for their friends, whom they invite from the adjacent villages on the occasion of this annual festival, supposed to be all souls' day, or analogous to it. More cattle are now slain, and the flesh mixed with small portions of every kind of grain grown in their fields; a great bonfire is raised, and the scene becomes one of confused riot and mirth, with blowing of the death-horn, mingled with yells and shrieks and beating of tom-toms, the confusion continuing from morning till night.

*Language.*—The Kotar language seems to be a vulgar dialect of Canarese, having the same Tamil roots, but differently pronounced, without the guttural or pectoral expression of the Todas. They are believed to be descended from some of the low caste tribes of the plains, who in days of yore sought refuge on these hills from persecution practised on them by the invaders of India. Thus they have been occupying these hills from time immemorial: they did not precede, but were the

first among the other tribes who followed the Todas, and formed settlements on them. They are not held in much estimation by the other hill tribes and European colonists, in consequence of their partiality to carrion, in which respect they resemble the Pariah of the plains, with this difference that, from their proximity to an European colony, their habits have been noticed more prominently; hence this tribe has acquired a more odious reputation than, perhaps, any of the other races in Southern India.\*

The Kotars either bury or burn their dead; more frequently burn, if they can command the wood required for the purpose. Next day, the ashes of the deceased are collected and buried in a hole; to mark the locality, a staff is set up. In cases of sickness, they make use of such roots and herbs as their old women commend. The sick are carefully attended to; but in some of the villages, as Kotagherry and Goodaloor, they resort largely to European medical treatment.

REMARKS.—The Kotars are a most remarkable class, and are not only the most industrious, but the only class of people that I have known who possess so extensive a knowledge of handicraft. Rude as their work may be, there is scarcely a useful work connected with the mechanical arts, trade, agriculture, or husbandry, that they are not conversant with; and had they only received the encouragement and patronage bestowed by Europeans on the idle Todas, it is impossible to state to what extent they might have advanced in the several arts they practise, and how far they might have got rid of some of their filthy habits. In this respect they are nothing better than the Pariahs of the plains, who comprise the majority of our domestic servants, many of whom still partake of carrion, and their relatives in distant villages glut over the carcasses of dead animals, and which, of right, they claim and carry away. Like the Pariahs of the plains, the Kotars are addicted to drinking, and, in the absence of liquor, resort to opium-eating. There can be no doubt that, like the Todas, these people also belong to the great Dravidian family who were driven to these mountain-tops by conquest and persecution.

The Kotar population consisted, in 1847, according to Captain Ouchterlony's memoir, of 307 souls, distributed in seven villages; but in 1867, the collector of the district gives the population as 802, with 217 houses.

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\* "They (Pariahs) will eat not only animals killed on purpose, but also such as die naturally. Oxen and buffaloes which perish from old age or disease belong to them of right, and they carry home and greedily devour the tainted carrion which they find on the highways and on the fields."—Abbé Dubois, p. 90.

## PART VI.—BADAGAS.

The Badagas are an agricultural race. The term Badaga is supposed to be a corruption of the word “Vuddaca”, or north, as they are believed to have migrated to these hills from either Mysore or Canara in consequence of famine or persecution, and, finding these hills would afford them shelter and quiet, they settled here, and at present constitute the chief population of these hills. On settling here originally, they acknowledged the sovereignty of the Todas, who pre-existed there, and agreed to pay tribute, or “goodoo”, if allowed to continue unmolested. The goodoo so paid comprises one-sixth of the produce; and although of late years they have sometimes questioned their right to pay, yet the Todas exact it as an immemorial right, so that with some demur it continues to be paid. The Todas call them “Mav”, or, father-in-law. Both men and women of the Badaga race work in cultivating the soil. Of late years, owing to the extension of European enterprise, a large number of the males find employment as labourers and artisans. They do not live in isolated communities like the other tribes, and their villages and huts are differently constituted both in material and style. Their houses are usually constructed in parallel lines, with intervening streets, each row of dwellings being built of stone and mud, with a roof of good thatch, and divided into separate compartments, having a wide terrace in front to dry, thresh, and winnow their grains. Their hamlets are generally located on some gentle eminence, surrounded by wide glades of grass or fields of cultivation, and present a neat appearance. The interior of the apartments are divided into two rooms, having a double tier of lofts one above the other. The back eaves are enclosed, and thus form a second or inner room. The door is the only opening, which measures 43 inches in height, and  $26\frac{1}{2}$  in breadth. The furniture comprises one or more mats, a rice pounder, and a mortar made in the floor,—a hole five or six inches deep,—one or more brass salvers or dishes, a few earthen vessels, and a fireplace. The walls of a few houses are white-washed, but this is, if it may be so termed, a late innovation. Each family has its cowpens or sheds in the vicinity, substantially built, for shutting up their cattle at night.

The Badagas have the usual elongated heads and Hindoo features, and are rather light-skinned, and are the fairest of the tribes who occupy these hills,—of small make generally. Many are comparatively wealthy, which only tends to corrupt them, by leading to slothfulness and sensuality, and renders them averse to moral or physical improvement. As a class




they are utterly illiterate, and show no anxiety to improve either their social or moral character. An average of twenty-five men gives the following weight and measurements:—age, 33·80 years; height, 66·70 inches; circumference of head, 20·61; neck, 12·22; chest, 31·83; arms, 9·20; thighs, 15·99 inches; and the weight (avoirdupois) 110·76 pounds. They are Hindoos, and followers of the Siva sect. They have numerous subdivisions of caste among them, each differing in some social or ceremonial custom, and are distinguished from each other by certain sacerdotal strings and amulets, which they wear on their persons. Eighteen sects, or castes, are enumerated. These are as follow:—

1. Woodearu, officiate as priests to the other classes in all family ceremonials.
2. Kongaru, } divided into { 1. Lingadikaries (vegetarians).
3. Adikaries, } { 2. Flesh-eating Adekaries.
4. Kanakaru, village accountants.
5. Chittre, outcasts from the Woodearu subdivisions.
6. Belli, another subdivision lower than the last, and believed to be the descendants originally of silversmiths.
7. Haruvaru, a spurious set of Brahmins, make use of the Poieta, and officiate as priests to the other classes during harvest.
8. Hattara, }
9. Anearu, } ryots.
10. Mari, }
11. Kasturi, } labourers and ryots.
12. Dumah, }
13. Gonoja, } do. do.
14. Manika, }
15. Toreas, the lowest caste among the Badagas.
16. Kumbararu, pot-makers.
17. Vellalers, a division from the Vellalers of the plains.
18. Koonde, inhabitants of the Khoonda mountains.

Each of these several subsections have their own ceremonies and peculiar social distinctions, which differ but slightly from each other. When a young man is desirous of forming a matrimonial alliance, he leaves the choice of his future partner to his parents; and when a selection is made, the couple are betrothed, but the marriage does not take place until the girl arrives at a mature age. Some formality is observed at their wedding ceremony: a pandal is erected, under which the wedding party assembles; a pot of water is thrown over the head of the bride, in the midst of the music and singing; the mother of the bridegroom afterwards ties a skein of silvery beads round the neck of her future daughter-in-law. When this ceremony is completed, on the first following auspicious day the bride is taken to the house of her husband, where she is received by him under another leafy canopy, and when finally installed in her new position, her parents wash their hands in token that

they resign all claims upon her to her husband. Polyandry does not exist among them, but each man has his own wife. As a class, the women of this tribe are far more chaste, and prostitution is unknown among them; but should a woman wish to separate from her husband, no restriction is placed upon her, except that she has to relinquish the children to their father. This loose morality has led to much mischief: when dissatisfied with each other, they frequently change husbands or wives, as fancy dictates. A married couple, thus parted, are permitted to marry a second time. These customs of marriage and divorce are common to the Kotar tribe. The Badagas are strictly Hindoos, and consume flesh meats, except beef. One section are vegetarians, subsisting, like the Brahmins of the plains, entirely on vegetables. They are partial to the cabbage, and a species of nettle (*Urticaria Tuberosa*), as vegetables. The latter grows freely on the hills, producing a large tuberous root of a highly nutritious nature, which is much esteemed and freely eaten by the Badagas. Their chief diet consists of rice and other dry grains, the produce of these hills.

*Dress.*—The men clothe themselves much like the natives of the plains, with head and waist-cloths, and a sheet is used, like a wrapper, covering the shoulders and trunk of the body. This is necessary in consequence of the coldness of the climate, and many use it now in the Toda fashion. The women pass a white cloth under their arms, which extends to a little below the knees. In this they roll themselves, fastening the cloth with a piece of cord under their arms, and a second around the pelvis, to prevent it getting loosened. This singular mode of dress gives them quite a mummy-like stiff appearance. A second small piece of cloth is tied round the head, with the ends floating behind. The arms and shoulders, and one-half of the legs below the knees, are bare. The women have tattoo marks, three rows of dots on the chest, each row comprising from seven to nine dots, each row being half-an-inch, and each dot a quarter of an inch apart. The forehead is marked thus, . The hair is thrown back, and knotted loosely, on the nape of the neck. They are partial to ornaments, and wear rings, bracelets, armlets, necklettes, and ear and nose rings. The latter are to be seen only occasionally. The ornaments are made of brass, iron, or silver, filagreed; the earrings are rather large, having a diameter of  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches. The women are domestic in their habits; kind, fond, and affectionate mothers, possessing the usual Asiatic features, with a feminine cast. They are simple, modest, and retiring. An average of twenty-five women gives the following weight and measurements:—age,

27·68 years; height, 58·51; head, 19·80; neck, 10·38; chest, 28·99; arms, 8·30; thighs, 14·14; length of arm, 27; length of hand, 6·75; breadth of hand, 3; length of legs, 34·50; length of foot, 9; breadth of foot, 3·25 inches; and the weight (avoir-dupois) 92 pounds.

The Badagas, like other tribes of Hindoos, have numerous deities. There are two sects, Siva and Vishnu. The principal deity of the Vishnuites is located in the—what is called—Rungasawmy Peak, and the officiating priests are men of the Irula tribe, where offerings of ghee and fruits are made. A secondary deity of this sect is located on a droog in the neighbourhood of the village of Hollikul, where a Badaga priest attends. But these people are not particular; as sometimes the same individual, carrying marks of Vishnu, may be seen officiating on Shiva's shrines. There are numerous deities, comprising male and female, whom they worship under different names. As a body, the Badagas are a timid and superstitious race, haunted with the dread of evil spirits, and are in perpetual fear of the Kurumbas, to whose mysterious power of sorcery and witchcraft they attribute all accidents and ailments which may happen either to themselves, or their families, cattle, and crops. Owing to this cause, in times past, this people became so excited as sometimes to murder the unfortunate Kurumbas without rhyme or reason, and some of the tribe have suffered the extreme penalty of the law in consequence. Yet, strange to say, with this exception, they, to some extent, respect the Kurumbas, and get them to officiate as priests on all social and ceremonial occasions, when connected with either their persons, families, fields, cattle, etc. They bury or burn their dead as they find most convenient at the time.

REMARKS.—The Badagas are ruled by their headmen and elders to a certain extent, subject to caste influence chiefly. They live peaceably among themselves, are kind and affectionate to their relatives and friends, respect the aged greatly, and tend to and rear their children with much love and care. In character, as a class, they are deceitful, ungrateful, and false. They constitute the largest population on the Neilgherries. Their marriage and other ceremonials are similar to those practised by the Hindoos of the plains; and in reading accounts of Hindoos of the plains, we find that of the Badagas, from whom they differ in no particular,—many of them, at the present time, have connections and friends on the plains. Consequently, I have not described their manners, habits, customs, and religion, as might be done. The brief account given above is ample for the purposes of this paper. In 1847, the population of the Badagas was 6,569, distributed over 227 villages.

In 1867, it is said to comprise 17,778 souls, distributed over 4,071 houses.

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PART VII.—IRULAS.

The Irulas are not, strictly speaking, inhabitants of the Blue Mountains, but occupy the lower slopes and jungles that skirt the base of the Neilgherries. They are scattered into small communities, practising a rude system of agriculture, which scarcely furnishes them with sufficient food, so that, when pressed for sustenance, they resort to the jungles, and live on such products as they can collect. They make use of animal food of every description, not even excepting vermin and reptiles. They find occupation in collecting for their immediate wants the wild fruits, herbs, and roots, to appease hunger; also honey, beeswax, gums, and dyes of various sorts, and medicinal herbs and drugs, which they barter with the people of the plains in exchange for food and clothes. They are very intrepid as regards the wild beasts they frequently meet with in the jungles; and in their search for honey, they sometimes suffer severely from contact with wild bears. They hunt and take game of every description with great cunning and expertness.

There are two classes of Irulas, recognised by the terms Urali and Kurutali. The general term Irula is derived from the Tamil word *Irul*, or “dark”, implying that there was no light in them, and that they were wild and uncivilised. The term *Urali* means “rulers of the country”, and *Kurutali*, “serfs”, or “common people”. The other hill tribes do not recognise the Irulas as inhabitants of the Blue Mountains, and do not hold much converse with them. The following is the result of the weight and measurements of an average of twenty-five men:—age, 26·68 years; height, 61·78 inches; circumference of head, 19·83; neck, 11·39; chest, 29·91; arms, 8·42; thighs, 15·17; length of arms, 30; hands, 6·50; breadth of hands, 3·25; length of legs, 34·50; feet, 9; breadth of feet, 3·25 inches; weight (avoirdupois) 96·20 pounds. They are tolerably good looking, very much superior in *physique* to the Kurumbas, and, in some respects, even to that of the Kotars; but they are an idle, dissolute set,—the majority being vagrants, living on what they can obtain from the jungles and natural resources of the forest through which they wander, rather than labour and cultivate. They pay a trifling kist to government, according to the nature and extent of their holdings; but their tenure is very loose, simply holding lands at pleasure by paying assessment; but they cultivate little. They

do not recognise the Todas as lords, nor do they pay them "goodoo". The women are strong and stoutly built, anything but prepossessing in appearance, and very dark skinned. I regret I had not the opportunity of taking their weights and measurements. They are fond of ornaments, and wear heaps of red and white beads about their necks, thin wire bracelets and armlets, with ear and nose rings.

The men wear no clothing but the lungooty in their habitats; but, when working on plantations, they wear cloths like other natives. The women wear a double fold of a wrapper cloth, which extends from the waist to the knees; the upper part of their bodies, with their bosoms, are nude. The men wear their hair anyhow; sometimes it is long and tied over the head, at others short and scraggy, playing to the breeze. The women are much the same; but those I saw at the fair at Mettapolliem had the hair well oiled, combed, and parted in the centre, thrown back, gathered, and shelved on the left at the back of the head, like most of the women on the plains.

At one time, the Irulas rarely held communication with the other natives, living isolated lives in secluded places and unhealthy localities, and eking out a precarious existence. Their villages were small, seldom exceeding five or six huts, and cattle-pens scattered far apart, mostly located in groves of plantain and other fruit-trees, and built somewhat after the Kurumba huts, surrounded by the usual filth and dirt. They are more numerous in the southern than in the eastern parts. But of late years they have improved wonderfully by mixing with others, and taking employ as coolies on plantations, and working side by side with other natives. They give satisfaction to their employers. They have also gained another advantage by attending the large fair, or shandy, held at Mettapolliem every Saturday. They were gradually attracted thither, and by freely mixing with the people on these occasions, they have lost their timidity, and become somewhat self-reliant, though to a small extent only as yet; but the civilising influence of intercourse is not lost, and is slowly gaining ground among them. The men possess (some of them) good thews and sinews, look hardy, and, from their physical conformation and habits, are well adapted for laborious manual labour, and sufficiently intelligent to be taught anything in the labour line. They are ready to emulate the other natives when they can, as may be seen in those employed on coffee estates, where they are not recognised from the other natives by their dress or manners; and it requires close personal knowledge, with much discrimination, to recognise them as Irulas.

*Religion.*—In this respect their ideas are confused. They

have some knowledge of Shiva and Vishnu,—more of the latter than of the former. Under the term of Mahari, they worship the goddess of smallpox, otherwise known as Mariatha, to whose honour they erect a small hut, which they dedicate as her temple. Here they prostrate themselves, and offer sacrifices of goats and cocks. They have a temple on Rungasawmy Peak in the vicinity of Kotagherry, where, during an annual ceremony, they officiate as priests, and crowds of the Badagas, as well as pilgrims from other parts, flock to celebrate the same, with offerings of money and produce. I find, in fact, that these Irulas are, in every respect, the same as those found in the Madras district, whom I have already described,—*vide* Proceedings of Government, dated 17th May, 1864, Revenue Department, and the third volume of *Transactions of the Ethnological Society*, new series, 1865, London, under the head of “Some rude Tribes, the supposed Aborigines of Southern India,” p. 373. In 1847, the Irulas comprised 461 souls, distributed in 22 villages. In 1867, they are represented to comprise 505 souls, and 101 houses.

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